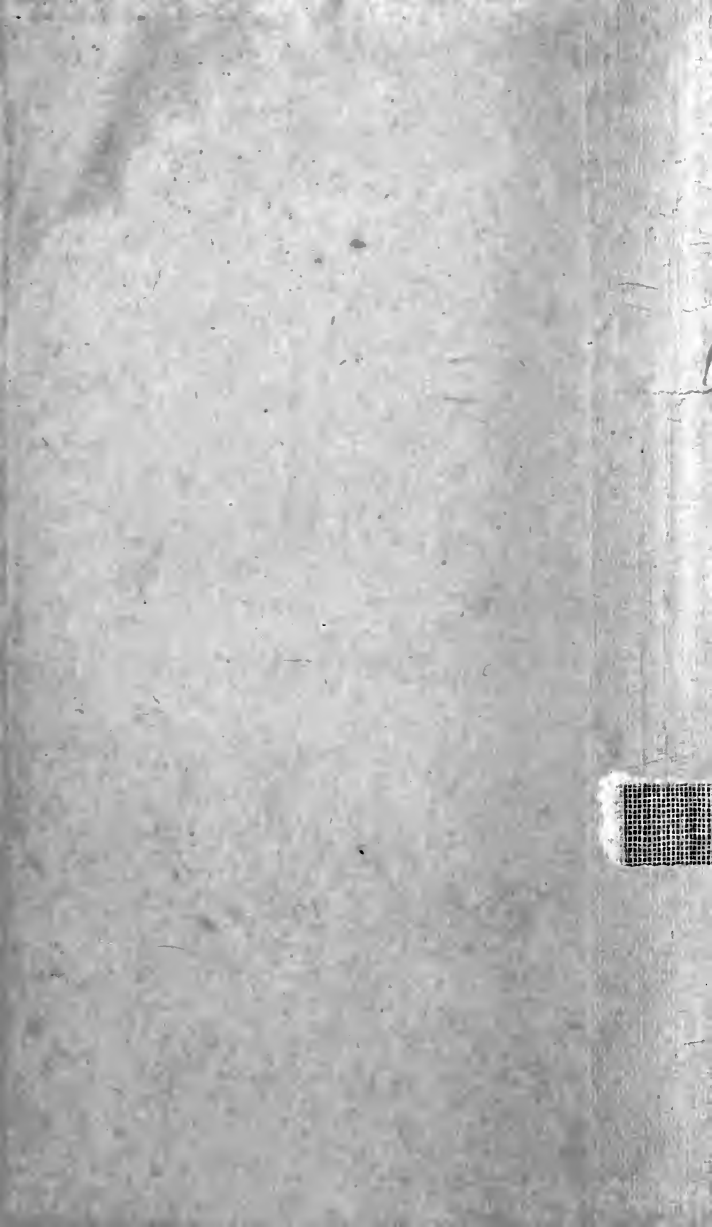




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MELIORA:

OR,

BETTER TIMES TO COME.



[Shrewsbury, Charles John Chetwynd  
Talbot] 19th Earl of.

# MELIORA:

OR,

## BETTER TIMES TO COME.

BEING THE

CONTRIBUTIONS OF MANY MEN

TOUCHING THE

PRESENT STATE AND PROSPECTS OF SOCIETY.

EDITED BY

VISCOUNT INGESTRE.

HUMANI NIHIL ALIENUM.

LONDON:

JOHN W. PARKER AND SON, WEST STRAND.

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SAVILL AND EDWARDS, PRINTERS,  
CHANDOS STREET.



TO

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE ALBERT, K.G.

*&c. &c. &c.*

THIS PLEA

FOR

THE WORKING CLASSES OF HIS ADOPTED COUNTRY

IS, BY SPECIAL PERMISSION,

*Most gratefully Enscribed,*

BY HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS'S

FAITHFUL SERVANT,

INGESTRE.

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## P R E F A C E.

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**I**T may, perhaps, with reason, be expected that the Editor of the 'Papers' contained in this volume, should give some explanation of his motives in their collection and publication. He will, therefore, by way of preface to the contributions of those individuals who have so kindly aided him, endeavour briefly to state the grounds of this attempt to attract public attention to subjects, many of which have already received so much consideration.

The social condition of the working classes of this nation has, of late years, been very closely analyzed. There is scarcely any one feature in the ordinary life of the working man, which has not been exposed to a very narrow scrutiny. Individuals of almost every rank and profession, have, either by voice or by pen, lent themselves to the task of developing the changes and chances which beset and attend the earthly career of what are called 'the masses.'

And now we seem to have at last awakened, as from a dream, to the real condition of these, the great majority of our fellow-creatures. We were aware that

a vast multitude of human beings around us were very poor and very ignorant ; we had grown up in the belief that their poverty was the inevitable accompaniment of their lot in life—their ignorance the necessary, or at least unavoidable, result of that poverty. We did not seem to care to look deeper into their condition. A certain amount of public and private charity grew out of the pity which the admitted trials of their condition begot ; we also talked much of the necessity of extending education ; we extolled, and sought to multiply, schools.

By degrees the full truth has burst upon us ; we cannot now, at the close of this, the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and fifty-one, plead ignorance, on any one point of the real moral and social condition of the millions, whose toil creates our national wealth, and on whose loyalty and welfare depends the very life of the nation.

Mines and factories, lodging-houses in the great towns, cottages in crowded villages, prisons, penitentiaries, lunatic asylums, emigrant ships, &c. &c., have all had their every mystery unravelled, their whole economy displayed. The energy of individuals has called into life many most valuable societies, has forced on the Legislature many wholesome enactments, in aid of moral and sanitary improvement—much has been done of real substantial good ; but the revelation of existing evil still calls for more and more active exercise of the spirit which seeks its removal. In nothing

has the value of the division of labour been more clearly shown than in the great social movement of our day. To do good has been a common object ; but individuals have marked out, as their own, particular fields of labour.

It was the Editor's desire, when he proposed to himself the present publication, to appeal to a number of those—the social workmen of the day—who were known, each in his own way, to have studied the condition of the working classes, to contribute, in the form of a 'paper' for publication, the result of the writer's own experience on that branch of social improvement to which he had most turned his attention. It was hoped thus to bring within one volume of convenient size a large amount of useful research and profitable suggestion.

And here the Editor would offer his most grateful thanks to those contributors who have so kindly, and simply as a labour of love, responded to his call. The writers of the following papers are men holding, on many subjects, there is no doubt, opinions widely differing from each other ; they are of many different ranks and professions ; and yet one and all freely came forward to aid in the one cause they all have, in common with the Editor himself, at heart—viz., the amelioration of the social condition of the working classes. This he claims as a very strong evidence of the wholesome feeling of the age on this most important subject.

The Editor's apology for venturing to place a 'Paper' of his own, amongst so many valuable contributions

from far more able and experienced writers, is simply the desire he had to show himself a worker, as well as collector of the works of others. He trusts it may serve to prove (especially to those of his own age and position) that so long as there is an anxiety to do good, there will never be wanting a field in which at least the attempt may be made. In evidence of this, the Editor would humbly direct attention to the Prospectus of the Society herein advertised. In the promotion of this society he has received much support, and feels no doubt but that ere long it will be seen in active beneficial operation.

Thus much of good, it is felt, can already be claimed as accomplished. One, young in years and little known, has been allowed to be the instrument in bringing many active and able men forward, to again press upon the public mind a path of duty to which there is a most urgent call. It is a path open to and inviting men of every grade—there is no rank which may not gain honour by entering upon it.

The Editor of these pages would rather take credit for willingness than ability, and is only anxious that his motives in undertaking this work may be fairly judged, and, consequently, appreciated.

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## THE BEER-SHOP EVIL.

BY THE HON. AND REV. SIDNEY GODOLPHIN OSBORNE,

VICAR OF DUBWESTON.

---

THE subject of the following pages is one to which, for many years past, we have given much consideration. Many of the evils incident to the condition of the labourers in agricultural districts, have lately not only attracted much attention, but the attention so given has produced many happy attempts at amendment. We are not aware, however, that any especial regard has been had to the question, how far some attempt might not with success be made to stem the mischief to the young labourers of a parish, *especially the unmarried*, from the want of some less pernicious evening resort than that now open to them in the beer-shop or public-house.

It will not be denied, that when there are two or more grown up young men in a labourer's family, still resident with the parents, their presence during a whole winter's evening in the one sitting-room is most inconvenient. There are many things to be done in the family of a poor man which must be done at the one fire, and the doing of which is neither decent nor convenient when the room is crowded by young men. The mere crowding of the one room by the presence of all the family who may be at home, is prejudicial to the common comfort, and for ever productive of unseemly quarrelling. Again, in no class of life is it found, that the young men will long endure the sameness and the necessary restraint of the domestic circle. Clubs, reading-rooms, social visiting, and other less innocent outlets are found in other classes, relieving the aged and the female portion of our families from the constant presence of the young men; and none, I think, will dispute the advan-

tage of this course, at least to that portion of the household whose duties, and whose age and sex, make the family circle their proper and almost constant scene of life.

Almost every clergyman and magistrate will tell you that there is, in every parish, some corner of a street, or particular spot, at which the regular congregating of the young men of the parish is not only productive of much nuisance to the neighbourhood, but tends also to great moral evil. Here, general licence is given to the tongue; early habits of gambling are formed; here, the minds of mere children pick up as they pass the current blasphemy and obscenity of the place.

The adjournment from the cottage kitchen to 'the corner' is only a step on the way to the beer-shop. The men out of work from their own evil conduct may be seen hereabouts all day; at nightfall they are joined by those who, yet in work, yet in possession of a character, are, from a force of circumstances, thus tempted to the one resort, where, alas, the seeds are sown which lead soon to the growth of habits utterly destructive of all respect.

If it is a cold, raw night, who can wonder that a few pence are clubbed together, and then follows an adjournment to the beer-shop, where the high-backed settle and a roaring fire, the mixed company, the liquor, and the pipe, all hold out the prospect of a pleasant evening. Beer-shop habits are not formed all at once; the free licence given to the tongue, the rampant blasphemy of the place, the language and doings of the few females who join the evening parties at such places, at first shock and shame the young lads, who, perhaps, have hardly left the Sunday-school a year. But, it is a fact, proving itself in every class, that the next step to shame at evil we do not choose to shun, is an aiming at the appearance of a proficiency in vices from which, as yet, in reality, we shrink. However, vice is an easy trade; we are all more or less adapted for it; it takes no long apprenticeship to gain the highest honours of its votaries. Very soon, the young men only use 'the corner' at early evening, that they may there form plans for the beer-shop for the remainder of the night.

It has been our lot in life to have had no limited experience of the ways and necessities of the criminal part of our agricultural population. There is scarce a shade of moral degradation, of criminal atrocity, which we have not studied from the 'life.' The training of the man of crime, and of those whose duty it is to detect his deeds. The result of crime, as seen in the solitary cell, nay, in the condemned cell; at the hulks, and on board the convict ship, has all been often exposed to our view. Step by step have we followed the criminal in the various stages of his nefarious education. The vegetables stolen from a neighbour's garden, and received from the mere child by a conniving parent; the robbery of a neighbour's fuel-stack, or a farmer's fence; the first snare, and the triumph of success—the *rabbit* sold at 'the corner' for twopence; from these, the alphabet of criminal learning, through all the grades of criminal education, we have traced our fellow-creatures, until we have known them to be the companions of burglars, ripe for any deeds of evil or violence. At length comes a heavy detection, and now, the last sentence of the law is barely escaped, and their lot is fixed—that of transportation in its most aggravated form.

We are prepared to go a great way with those who say, a love of 'drink' is the root of two-thirds of English crime; but we look deeper still, and would try and trace the birth of this said 'love of drink.'

Let us look for a moment at the 'beer-shop,' the school for drinkers. What is called 'the public-house,' *i.e.*, the house licensed to sell spirits, has all the attendant evils to which such a place must be inevitably liable. But, as far as our experience goes, the early initiation of the young men of a village into drinking habits far more generally takes place at the beer-shop. The beer-shop in country villages, even where drinking on the premises is licensed, is usually kept by a person but little, if at all, above the class of common labourers. His presence, or that of any of his family, is no restraint upon the customers who frequent his house. He don't expect any of 'the respectables' of the parish to spend their evenings with him; if they did, he

knows he should lose many a good customer—*i.e.*, hard-drinker. His object is to sell the largest quantity of beer he can, for he has a commission, or per centage on the quantity consumed. Everything which can encourage drinking, short of compromising his licence, or involving him in any overt criminal act, he holds himself at liberty to promote. The skittle-ground in the back garden, cards or shovel-boards within the house, though not legal, are so connived at, that they are part of a beer-shop-keeper's regular stock. He knows the value of a good fire and high-backed bench; he knows how drink makes talk, talk begets desire for more drink. He knows when to hear and when to be deaf; 'he is no eavesdropper, not he.' 'Perhaps,' as the policeman says, 'they did talk the business over in his kitchen; *he has nothing to do with their talk, so as they don't talk to him.*'

But perhaps the worst, and, alas! now very common schools of crime, are the beer-shops, or 'jerries,' not licensed to sell on the premises, who do, nevertheless, so sell beer, and often carry on as good a trade as their neighbours who have the higher licence. At these places the landlord is at the mercy of his customers; if they inform against him to the Excise he is liable to a heavy fine. It can be then no matter of surprise, that such places are the favourite resort of thieves and poachers, that the keepers of them are often agents in the disposal of stolen property. The public are generally but little aware how numerous these houses are. The Excise and all other local authorities seem to be purposely blind to their existence. In some places, there seems to be no disguise about the matter; within a short distance of the spot where these pages are written, there is a village notorious for its immorality, and a very hot-bed of crime, in which, though there is every evidence of the amount of beer consumed at the several beer-shops, there is no one such shop licensed to sell beer on the premises, there is no public-house in the place.

Now, admitting, and who will deny it? that the beer-shops are in the rural districts very generally, under the best of circumstances, but ill ordered; that, in by far the great majority of cases, those that keep them neither care to

check crime in others, nor to avoid the appearance of it in themselves,—we must ask of ourselves, what other place of social resort have the young men of our villages? Their presence at home is often most inconvenient, in very many cases the circumstances of their home are such as to drive them from it; young men of every class naturally seek the company of those of their own age; they as naturally, at their time of life, are easily led to purchase the social intercourse which might be innocently enjoyed, at the cost of obtaining it where it leads to evil. What have we hitherto done in the way of antidote to the admitted poison of promiscuous society in such places as these beer-shops? We are aware that some villages have evening-schools for adults, at which there are occasional amusing and instructive lectures. These are good things, but they do not meet the case we are considering.

We must now take a view of the matter with which many of our readers may perhaps find fault; but we speak from no little experience, and after no little consideration. To war against these ill-regulated resorts, you must be prepared, in some degree, to yield to the tastes which make them popular. You must not forbid the taste of beer, bar the meal of bread and cheese, or even exclude the poor man's pipe. But is there no way left open to us by which we can provide the men of a village with a place of resort, where they can have refreshment such as they like *in moderation*; where the glass or two of beer may be consumed, and the pipe smoked, the fire enjoyed—and this with a so far selected company, that these comforts shall be obtained exempt from the evil of the presence of the blasphemers, the drunkards, and the dishonest of the locality?

In London, the young men of the upper and middle classes have, it is true, every sort of evil place open to them; but they are not driven to them from the absence of places where they may enjoy each other's society under the decent restraints of respectable society. Why should not there be village clubs—a sort of moral beer-houses? Let us suppose that we had to start such an institution in a country village. We would then have a large room, in proportion

to the population of the village. There should be such an arrangement of the one or two fire-places as would secure the greatest amount of cheerfulness, without *crowding*. We would have a large table, and one or two smaller ones; the room should be well lighted from above. There should be provision for the hanging up of coats and hats, so that each man might, on leaving, easily find his own. The floor should be flagged; but so built as to be dry. It should be kept sanded. A clock should hang conspicuous in some part of the room; pains should be taken to secure proper ventilation. This room should be open from six to nine in the evening in the winter, perhaps to as late as ten in the summer. A proper 'steward' should be appointed. As it would only be open in the evening, some respectable inhabitant might easily be obtained for the office. He should be responsible that the 'rules' of 'the room' were adhered to.

We would have in this room a small bookcase, under the steward's custody; in this, for the use of the members, we would keep a certain number of plain, amusing books, *chiefly of a secular character*. From time to time, these books to be changed for others of a like nature. On the small tables we would place copies of such works as the *Illustrated News*, perhaps a number or two of the county or other newspapers.

The steward should have an active, trustworthy beer boy under him. He himself should be bound to provide bread, cheese, and coffee, *at a certain fixed price*. Any member of the room wishing for beer, to give the money for it to the steward, who is to be answerable that the boy forthwith fetches it from the beer-shop, delivering it to the steward to set before the party ordering it. *On no account should the steward ever have any interest, direct or indirect, in the sale of the beer consumed. Spirits not to be allowed.*

No member of the room to send for more than one quart of beer of any description on any one evening; but no limit to be put as to the consumption of the bread and cheese and coffee. No credit to be allowed to any member beyond one week for these articles, and then not to a higher amount than two shillings. No beer to be fetched except *the money*

*is sent with the order. No gambling of any sort to be allowed.* Certain fines to be imposed for certain offences, such as swearing or indecent conversation, quarrelling, &c. We would allow smoking on the condition that the tobacco and pipes are sent for, and paid for at once, in the same way as the beer. The steward should not leave his desk or bar, in one corner of the room, during the time 'the room' is open, except to transact any business in it. It would be his duty to check all improper conduct, and to report, on each committee night, the offences and offenders.

To become a member of 'the room,' a decent character, and age *not under eighteen*, a resident in the parish, should be the qualifications. The number should be limited, so as to secure the comfort of all; vacancies to be filled up from time to time by the votes of the committee. Once a year a committee to be chosen by ballot, for general purposes during the following twelve months. A sum (say one shilling a quarter), to be paid by each member towards the general expenses.

The above partial unfolding of our project will, we hope, be sufficient to call attention to its principle. In carrying it out, we are well aware it will require a good deal of attention to the details necessary for its success. It might, for instance, be advisable to make it a rule, that no beer should be sent for after eight o'clock; and it might, perhaps, be expedient to limit the *smoking* to a certain portion of the evening. The plan of the room would need careful consideration. It should be so constructed and furnished that those who wish to take a book, and read, might do so, without being subject to interruption from the mere talkers. There are several details of structure which might, with benefit, be considered, to secure—or, at least, to encourage—habits of decency.

Except during the hours of divine service, we are inclined to think that the having 'the room' open to the members for a few hours on the Sabbath might be advisable; but then we would have it simply open for reading and quiet conversation. We would allow no eating or drinking of any sort; and we would, on that day, put upon the tables

books of a nature in unison with its character. One thing is most important—every member should be allowed, whenever ‘the room’ was open, to enjoy its fire, and its books, &c., without being in any way expected to either eat, drink, or smoke.

Now, we are quite aware of the opposition which will at once arise against our plan. We never knew a plan for the amelioration of the condition of the poor which had not its earnest and sincere opponents; for what plan is there of human device which is not liable to abuse, and therefore open to warning? There are those who will say, ‘What can be worse than this tempting of young men, and even of husbands (for we should hope to see men of all ages occasional visitors of ‘the room’) away from their homes?’ We know, from long experience, how very different a scene, in reality, the one sitting-room of the cottage is, from the picture drawn of it in books and popular engravings. The aged man with the open Bible, the husband and wife (the latter his child), with their numerous progeny, generally depicted nearly of an age. The tidy order of the room, and the domestic tint of the whole affair is, we admit, most pleasing to imagine, or to sketch. But, alas! the reality of the picture is very rare; and, it has often struck us, that, with the exception of the handsome young man looking over the book of the eldest daughter, *the young men of the house never appear in it*. This youth is evidently *not yet* one of the family. A room of fourteen feet by sixteen, staircase to be taken out of it, in which all the domestic work has to be done, all the family fed, all the children kept in peace; the fire of which, small as it is, is, between potato-pots, kettles, &c., exposed to a constant siege—such a scene, by God’s blessing, does often light up with the peace he bestows; and we have often seen it so; but we have learned, at the same time, that mere human domestic peace and quiet have hard struggles under such an aspect, when there is no disposition on the part of father and brothers occasionally to leave the kitchen to mother, sisters, and the little ones.

It will be said the allowance of a ‘pot,’ or quart of beer is too much, and yet we have our own reasons for



thinking a restriction to a lesser quantity would militate against the success of our plan. Our firm conviction is, that the result of the plan we advocate, if worked out with care, would be, that coffee and bread and cheese, at the price it could now be given *good*, would very soon supplant with many the more expensive indulgence of beer. We rely a good deal on the cleanliness, the order, and cheerful aspect of 'the room,' on the feeling of respect for outward appearance it would produce; the good fire, the comfortable bench, the unrestricted (so long as it is peaceful and proper) conversation, the books, &c., we are convinced, would work to produce habits of sobriety. We saw enough in the Great Exhibition this year to satisfy us that the most bold and unabashed of the lower classes are highly susceptible of moral atmosphere. Place them where all speaks of order, all around appeals to their better nature, and though they may want refinement, they at once prove that the materials for its production are within them.

A very great deal would depend upon the good sense and conduct of the steward. His powers should be extensive, in the way of upholding the rule of 'the room.' They should, however, be carefully defined. Mere noise is not, in this class, disorder; there may be much vulgarity, and yet not that distinct, offensive indecency which should be at once interrupted. The soft answer to turn away wrath would be a golden maxim to the steward; for he could often stop a quarrel before it had reached the pitch to make it finable. His instructions should be, to remember the class he is dealing with, and to try and promote order and decency, rather than be for ever trying to enforce it. The great feature in any attempt to carry out our project would be, to bear in mind 'the room' is, for its primary purpose, to be simply a place of evening social resort—a refreshment and reading room adapted for the labouring class. It is to give those who would avoid the ill-regulated beer-shop the opportunity of getting, in a well-regulated place, the refreshment and society they seek. It is not to be a school, a lecture-room, or a chapel. That it would act in aid of adult schools, would foster a taste for 'lectures,' and tend

to fill places of worship, we have no doubt. On the Sunday alone would we divest it of its secular character, and then only by putting a stop to the sale of refreshment, and putting on the tables books of a nature partly or wholly religious; but even here we would aim at the giving some books in which the mind should be amused as well as instructed; such as religious biographies, &c. We would exclude books of a direct controversial character. Honorary members should be induced to support 'the room' by their subscriptions, and their aid would be valuable, as a 'court of last resort,' in any disputes the working committee could not themselves adjust. Our own impression is, that, once started, it might be made an almost self-supporting institution.

With regard to the present beer-shops, we must here state our most deliberate opinion that they are, to the community at large, most injurious, and the injury they inflict on society is of a most costly nature. It seems to be the business of no one officer or authority in particular to look after them; they are allowed openly, without any disguise, to break laws the enactments of which are notorious. We may do all that human zeal and ingenuity, all that the most unbounded philanthropy, can devise, to promote education, to uphold religion, to reward industry; still, we can make little impression on that dense mass who, bred under much moral disadvantage, are thus early beset with all the temptations of these places of resort.

We trust yet to see the day when those who rule us will arrive at the conclusion, that what is gained to the excise by the licence given to intemperance is more than lost, by the expense to the 'Home Department' of jails and transports; that it is a folly to expect that education can progress if her course is clogged by schools which attract, by their pandering to the very appetites she would seek to control. Untaught human nature is, after all, only unbridled animal appetite. It seeks the food it loves, and loves the food which degrades. The drink which excites, and the obscenity the result of the excitement, become a second and aggravated evil nature. This nature will still

crave for more and more of its debasing food. Industry and drunkenness are incompatible. The earnings to pay for the drunkard's delights must be the wages of dishonesty. Small thefts, little poachings, will pay for the initiation of the 'jerry man:' greater thefts, a larger scale of poaching, have soon to provide for his increased expenditure in his increasing sin. Thus, from step to step, he is carried on to his end—'delirium tremens' in the workhouse—death, perhaps, on the gallows—or life prolonged in misery at the convict settlement.

If the plan of attack we have suggested in these pages on this monster evil has only this effect, that it leads in any one locality to any attempt, however small, to check the resort of the young to these places, or to procure for the said places a better legal regulation, our end will be answered.

## RICH AND POOR.

BY THE REV. CHARLES GIRDLESTONE, M.A.,

RECTOR OF KINGSWINFORD, STAFFORDSHIRE.

---

IF all of us were to start on a level, in point of worldly goods, to-day, the distinction between Rich and Poor would have arisen by to-morrow. Some would straightway go to work ; others to play. Some would use their means temperately ; others would enjoy them immoderately. Some would improve what they had got, mending, and making, and devising how to turn all to the best account ; others would waste, and break, and spoil, and destroy. Some would deny themselves, and begin to lay by, abstaining for the present out of regard to the future ; others, not caring to look beyond the pleasure of the passing hour, would gratify their immediate inclinations at all risk of consequences to come. Thus the morrow's sun would disclose an inequality of means. It would arise on some with their property improved, and on others with their goods diminished.

If we could see the same parties after an interval not of a day, but of a week, or month, or year, the change would be more marked, the difference much greater, and the contrast and its causes far more obvious. By the twelvemonth's end, if not sooner, the idle and the wasteful would be in a state of destitution ; whilst the industrious would have secured plenty, and to spare. The self-indulgent and intemperate would have consumed or wasted all ; the sober and self-denying would have laid up in store abundantly. The one sort must now beg or steal, they must sustain themselves by force or by fraud ; or else they must become dependents on the bounty of the other sort. If fraud and violence are to prevail, all may once more be put upon a level ; but it would be a lower level than before. For some little time, those who had most cunning or most strength

would get for themselves the largest share, and leave the rest to suffer want. But in such a case there would be an end to the ordinary motives which prompt men to practise industry, temperance, frugality, and honesty. And thus poverty must soon overtake all classes. All would be on a level; but it would be the level of universal beggary. If, instead of force or fraud, we reckon on the exercise of bounty, for supplying all the wants of the destitute, if the industrious and the frugal are to be secured in the ownership of their earnings and savings, and then, out of their free-will, are for ever to support all that prefer idleness and intemperance, this would imply, what is far from the fact, that riches and a bountiful disposition always go together. It would seem to require that all the wealthy should be perfect Christians, if not perfect angels. Nay, rather, this would be quite different from a Christian state of things, in one respect, that it would introduce the primitive community of goods without the primitive community of graces. It would be to offer a premium to unchristian practices. A society in which one class is always to work, and save, and give, and the other always to be idle and wasteful, would be inconsistent at once with the law of human nature as it is, and with this principle of the social fabric as it ought to be, namely, 'If any would not work, neither should he eat.'

It follows, that a level of equality in the possession of this world's goods cannot hold amongst mankind for a year, a month, a week, or even a single day; except on principles soon leading to universal destitution. It is the law of our being, that forethought, industry, frugality, and self-restraint, are the means of acquiring, possessing, and enjoying throughout life, competence and abundance. Every man is more or less interested in securing the due operation of this law, in strengthening the legitimate influence of the motives, which tend to make men practise these virtues; that there may be as much as possible earned to-day, and husbanded against to-morrow, by the largest possible number of individuals. Thus may all painful apprehension for to-morrow's wants be best removed, and the wants, when they occur, be best satisfied. If I cannot reckon on securing the fruit of my labour,

I shall not feel much inclined to work at all. But if I am persuaded that what I get, or save, will not be taken from me by violence or stealth, then I shall be apt to dig, and sow, and plant; I shall build, or weave, or fabricate. I shall leave off in my meal when I have had enough, or perhaps before; and so put by a part for the meal that is to come. I shall lay up clothing in summer, ready for winter use; and in fine weather I shall be preparing a house for shelter against the storm. Much more, if I can leave to my children after me whatsoever I have thus honestly acquired, regarding them, and my children's children, as a continuation of myself, much more shall I be inclined to deny myself that I may provide for them; much more shall I be diligent in labouring now, that they may hereafter enjoy leisure. The rights of inheritance may oftentimes transmit the earnings of the diligent to be wasted by the prodigal; and a patrimony derived from the wise, and great, and good, may be held by a degenerate race of mean, selfish, and worthless descendants. But in the uncertainty of life's continuance, it is not enough to have security, by the laws of property, for enjoying the fruit of our labours ourselves. We may never live to enjoy it. We must therefore have the power of bequeathing to our relatives and friends that which we do not require for our own use. Owing to that affection for kindred even yet unborn which is characteristic of the human race, it is often seen, that to become the founder of a family spurs a man to greater exertions, and binds him down to greater self-restraint, than the prospect of his own future personal enjoyment. And owing to the connexion of interests which pervades all classes of society, it cannot fail to happen, that whatsoever of real value is earned, or made, husbanded, or improved, by each individual separately, redounds, sooner or later, more or less, to the advantage of the community collectively.

Thus it is evident that security of property, involving the distinction between Rich and Poor, is essential to the welfare, if not to the very existence, of society. It is sanctioned by all religion, natural and revealed. But it is founded in that which is preliminary to the influence of

religion, namely in the natural constitution of each human being, the natural inequality of mankind amongst themselves. Neither in muscular strength, nor in intellectual power, any more than in perseverance, endurance, and self-restraint, are men absolutely on a level, either by nature or by habit. And as it is ordained, that what a man gets should always bear some proportion to his exercise of these qualities, there cannot but be a perpetual tendency to inequality in outward circumstances, in wealth, rank, and power, amongst the different members of our common race. It is useless to inquire what might be best for all, if perfect love universally prevailed. It is enough to know, that taking men as they are, security of property, whilst it sanctions, and tends to perpetuate, the inequality between Rich and Poor, tends also to develop the utmost possible amount of diligence and frugality, in the largest number of individuals, and thereby to accumulate the largest possible amount of goods of all kinds; which, if duly used, and even in spite of much abuse of them on the part of their possessors, are sure to prove conducive to the benefit of all the classes of mankind.

The great problems to be solved, in the case of such large accumulations of property as now exist amongst us, are, how to promote this general diffusion of the benefit of accumulated wealth, without infringing on that security of property which alone leads to its accumulation or existence; how to reduce the enormous inequality between our Rich and our Poor, not by pulling down the one, but by lifting up the other; how to render the wealth, which has been acquired by industry, at once safely enjoyable by its owners, and beneficial even to the idle and improvident; a resource for the relief of their necessities, without encouraging their improvidence and idleness.

Now in a great measure these results take place without any pains or purpose of ours; owing to those laws of our nature, which interest all members of the same community, more or less, in each other's welfare. The capital of the wealthy facilitates, in various ways, and by innumerable means, the efficiency of the labour of the poor, incidentally,

unintentionally, and almost unavoidably. It enables the tiller of the soil, or the workman in the shop, to enjoy, in return for his day's work, the products of all the quarters of the globe, as elements of his food, and as materials of his clothing. It may be true, that cotton and silk, sugar and tea, are imported by the merchant, and retailed by the trader, for the sake of their own gain; but if there were not many rich enough to import them and to deal in them, such commodities would never reach the poor man's dwelling. Again, whilst those who are independent of manual labour have leisure for the pursuits of science and of art, the results of their studies, in the comforts and embellishments of life, are in many instances diffused spontaneously amongst those classes, which, if left to themselves, could never have devised them. It is the science of the philosopher that gives security to navigation, speed to the communication of intelligence, extension to commerce, and power almost unlimited to the appliances of mechanical strength. Each cottage has its clock, to measure time; each hearth its fuel fetched from far, and raised from deep below the surface of the earth; these and other like conveniences, procured, and perfected, and multiplied, by various, curious, and costly machinery, none of which could ever have been brought into existence under the prevalence of any practicable system of equality in the condition of all mankind. On the walls of the most humble apartment may be seen prints taken from designs of the great masters of art, and on its shelves may be found books containing thoughts that breathe and words that burn, written by the greatest prodigies of genius; possessions, which secure to the poor man in his solitude the society of the departed and the distant, of the wise, the great, and the good; advantages, which, if used aright, can impart to the hardy sons of toil a refinement of intellect and feeling, often sorely lacking in the spoilt children of indolent enjoyment.

But besides this natural tendency of earthly advantages to be in some sort diffusive, through the intercourse, and intimate connexion, and mutual dependency, between the different classes of society, there are other forces continually at



work, counteracting the no less natural tendency of man's selfishness to keep to himself and to his family, as far as he can exclusively, the use and enjoyment of his property. Various and powerful are the motives which induce men to give of their substance to their brethren ; and there are moreover ways of spending money, which partake of the nature, or pass current under the forms, of giving it. To behold want without attempting to relieve it is truly painful to very many, who thus often give largely, though to some extent selfishly. Again, many give because it is disreputable not to give away a certain amount in proportion to their means, and because it is popular to be bountiful. Very many give according to their ability, and beyond it, from far higher and purer motives. Then there are bazaars, and charity balls, and charity concerts ; by means of which large sums are collected for charitable purposes, though it cannot be said that any alms are given. And all this, applied in countless ways, to meet every variety of human suffering, is supplemental and subsidiary to our great national system of Poor-laws ; which rigidly assesses property for the relief of poverty ; and which secures the necessities of life for all the destitute, however largely answerable for their own destitute condition. So that if it be true that there is now in this country an accumulation of capital, unprecedented in proportion to our numbers, it is no less true, that we have an unparalleled number of charitable institutions, and that there is an amount of almsgiving, public and private, such as never before or elsewhere has been put in practice.

With all these agencies at work, it seems strange that there should be so many poor, and that they should suffer so much by poverty, in the midst of the multitude of the rich, and often close to their very doors. This arises partly from the misapplication of no small portion of our alms, and partly from the absolute impossibility of effectually and permanently helping those, who will not heartily try to help themselves. There is indeed no slight amount of error in some notions still generally prevalent, as to the nature of the evils besetting the poor, and as to the best means of removing them. In the want of food and clothing many sum up all the ills of poverty ; and it is supposed that to

supply these requisites abundantly is sure to set all to rights. But the fact is, that the rich more frequently suffer by too much food, and by costly but injudicious clothing, than the poor by a bare back or empty stomach. And it may be questioned, whether amongst our working classes any do ever come at all to such want as this, except through some cause quite distinct from their not having inherited a competence, or not being possessed of property. It may be questioned whether any labourer, or artisan, who is honest, industrious, frugal, and sober, need ever resort to alms or to the workhouse. Abject want is almost always the result of grievous error, or of gross misconduct. The human race is in fact so constituted, that each individual must take an active part in working out his own welfare, or it is absolutely unattainable. No amount of food and clothing, however bountifully supplied, will make an idle man industrious, or a wasteful woman frugal, but rather the reverse. The qualities, without which it is impossible to emerge from abject poverty, may be fostered in the poor by the judicious application of wealth, but they are greatly discouraged and hindered in their growth by its indiscriminate use. In the absence of those qualities, to supply food and clothing to the indigent is a palliative of disease, available only so far as it is necessary to preserve the patient's life during the process of effectual cure. And even to give employment rather than alms, if it be employment of a demoralizing kind, or under demoralizing circumstances, or tending to demoralizing results, though this may set the willing labourer to work, and so far give a spur to industry, is to destroy faster than we build up, is to make our wealth the means of perpetuating the ills of poverty, by laying fresh temptations to dereliction of principle in the path of the poor.

It is therefore of the first importance for the rich, as they desire to elevate the condition of their poorer brethren, that they should exercise a sound discretion, both in that which they give, and in that which they spend, with a view to doing good. As a specimen of ill-judged bounty, as far as it is any bounty at all, as an instance in which the sacred name of charity is misused in the most absurd manner, it is not easy to conceive any better illustration, than the

public balls frequently advertised for the benefit of some Licensed Victualler's Asylum.\* Licensed Victualler means the landlord of a public-house. And the asylum is a place of comfortable retreat for such of these as come to want. Now nothing is more notorious, than that public-houses, and their base counterfeits, beer-shops, are the chief scenes of temptation to the labouring classes. There it is, for the most part, that they learn to be idle and dissolute. There it is most commonly, that they are led to make shipwreck of all the blessings of home, and of all the hopes of eternity. Thence it is that they set out on that career of im-

\* NOTE.—The following is the copy of such an advertisement, with the names omitted. It is taken from a provincial newspaper, dated Nov. 27, 1851 :—

SECOND ANNUAL FULL DRESS BALL, FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE  
 ——— LICENSED VICTUALLERS' ASYLUM, UNDER THE DIS-  
 TINGUISHED PATRONAGE OF

[Here follow the names of several peers; M.P.'s; officers in the army, navy, and yeomanry; esquires; aldermen and councillors of the borough.]

The managing committee have much pleasure in soliciting the attention of the nobility, gentry, and inhabitants of ——— and neighbourhood to this announcement, looking back with confidence upon the favourable result of the ball last year, and the universal satisfaction expressed by the numerous visitors who attended it; and considering that it is got up entirely for the laudable object of CHARITY, they feel comment to be unnecessary to ensure a liberal response to this appeal, and beg most respectfully to add that, to enhance the comfort of the visitors as far as possible, the increased and vigilant attention of the committee will be paid to the whole of the arrangements.

Messrs. ——— and ——— have kindly consented to act as masters of the ceremonies.

———'s quadrille band, of the nobility's balls, Royal Assembly Rooms, ——— is engaged.

Gentlemen's tickets, 7s. 6d.; ladies', 5s.; to be had at the Town Hall, on the day of the ball, and previous to that time of Mr. ———, stationer, &c., — Street, where all orders addressed, containing a remittance for tickets, will be punctually attended to.

The police will be in attendance to keep clear the avenues for entrance, &c.

Dancing to commence at nine o'clock.

Carriages to set down with horses' heads towards ———.

Admission to the — gallery by tickets, 1s. each.

No money taken at the doors.

Refreshments.—Wines, &c., Mr. ———, ——— Street; Tea, Coffee, Ices, &c., Mr. ———, — Street.

providence which brings them to the workhouse, or go forth on those errands of crime whose end is imprisonment, or a felon's death. And yet for the publican, of all people in the world, when the gains of his evil trade prove treacherous, there must be asylums provided by public contributions, and supported by full-dress balls. The union-house, which paupers call Bastile, thronged by victims of the public-house system, is not good enough for him who sought to thrive upon their ruin, and failed through some blunder or extravagance of his own. But the noble and the gentle must meet together in full dress, with bands and masters of the ceremonies, to cheer, and grace, and dignify, if they can, the latter end of the poor man's worst enemy.

The true friends of the Poor, amongst the Rich, are those who devote the largest share of time and means to their moral and religious culture, who both give largely to these objects, and spend freely with a view to them; and who, at the same time, watch that they gain nothing for themselves, and derive none of their enjoyments, from any property, trade, pursuit, or amusements, which tend to the moral damage of their neighbours. Such men, instead of patronising publicans, and multiplying public-houses, do away with every licence on their estates, not required for the accommodation of travellers. And whilst they use their utmost influence to diminish the number of places resorted to for the purposes of tipping, they do all that in them lies towards making the poor man's home comfortable, and the poor man fond of the comforts of his home. His mind needs to be opened, his taste cultivated, his feelings refined, his conscience informed and quickened, and his sense of things divine and of his own heavenly destiny awakened and maintained. All that money can effect towards promoting these objects must be freely contributed by the rich. And whilst thereby they will be forwarding the spiritual and eternal interests of their brethren, they will be doing more than by any other means to secure for them a better lot in this world, for they will be promoting the formation of those habits which do most to make men thrive and prosper upon earth.

Besides the exercise of a sound judgment in almsgiving, the condition of the poor, and their relation to the rich, are materially affected by the manner in which the rich spend their money on themselves. Herein infinite harm has been done by the sophistical maxim that public vices are private benefits, and by the false notion that a lavish expenditure of any kind, whatsoever trade or employment it may stimulate, is alike beneficial to the parties employed. But if the poor need to have their principles strengthened, as the best way to have their wants supplied by their own independent exertions, it can be no slight evil to foster and countenance in them a taste for gross sensual enjoyments, by the example of wasteful, selfish, and luxurious living, on the part of the higher classes. When the presidents, and patrons, and munificent supporters, of our ecclesiastical and educational institutions, allow in themselves the self-indulgence which they deprecate in others, they must not be surprised to find that their pupils and scholars, their dependents and domestics, repeat, after a coarse fashion, in public houses, beer-shops, and gin palaces, in casinos, low theatres, and dancing rooms, the dissipation of time, health, means, and morals, which is enacted on a more brilliant scale in opera-houses and club-houses, in saloons and drawing-rooms, at routs, and balls, and banquettings. And besides this pernicious influence of ill example, in a lavish expenditure on the pomps and vanities of sense, it is to be observed, that there is a wide difference in the nature, and in the social value, of the things actually produced, by means of money spent on fine clothing, sumptuous fare, splendid mansions, furniture, and equipage, with costly entertainments to match, and those things which result from money spent in improving an estate, promoting public works, cultivating arts and sciences, encouraging literature, and exercising a liberal but simple hospitality. The satisfactions of the former class perish in the using, and are confined to the exclusive use of those who first enjoy them. The other kind of expenditure yields pleasures which redound to the benefit of many, acts not as a vortex for the consumption of wealth, but as a flowing stream for its healthful diffusion,

and gives back to the spender his money's worth, in goods, which reach, directly or indirectly to all who dwell around him.

The foregoing considerations unite to direct our attention to the Sanitary Movement of the present times, as one of the most promising means that can be conceived, whether forwarded by giving or by spending, for bringing into a better harmony the relations between Rich and Poor. For our own nation to have led the way in this holy enterprise will hereafter redound to its glory, no less than any of its previous great achievements. And it is a duty the more incumbent on the wealthy in this country, because here it is less practicable, than in almost any other realms, for the poor man to become the owner of his dwelling-house, or to have the control of its structure and arrangements. And yet it is on these that he is largely dependent for the continuance of vigorous health. And on his health largely depends his power of earning his livelihood for the present, and of laying up in store for the future. And when we say, that no man who is honest, diligent, frugal, and sober, need ever come to want, we ought perhaps to add, except in case of sickness early in life, or long-continued in later years. Now, it has been proved that such cases of distress prevail amongst the poor, chiefly through the agency of causes which might be to a great degree prevented; through overcrowding of persons in apartments, of houses in streets, and of streets in towns, through lack of access to pure air, through scanty supply of pure water, through defective drainage, and defective riddance of all kinds of rubbish and refuse. These are evils which none but the rich can effectually remedy for the poor. These are evils for which an effectual remedy requires large capital, combined operations, scientific supervision, and the interference and sanction of the law. The rich can remedy these evils, in a great measure, by their own expenditure and gifts, by devoting to the subject their attention and their time, and by taking pains to teach the poor, on their part, to co-operate. The application of capital to undertakings of this kind will probably prove productive of money profit, in the end, to those who supply the funds. But let them rather under-

take the work on a liberal scale, throughout the length and breadth of the land, on the score of humanity, on the score of Christianity. Let them rejoice to give the poor man riches, by helping to secure his health. Let them deem it better than any feast that they could set forth, than any toy that they could purchase, than any fortune they could amass, to have diminished the sufferings, and prolonged the years of useful enjoyable existence, to the great mass of their fellow creatures.

Health moreover is not the only gain which sanitary reformers aim at. Air and water, light and cleanliness, are not the only points in which they seek to place the poor on an equal footing with the rich. Morals and religion are concerned in the success of their enterprise. The bare walls of a bleak garret, the damp floor of a dark cellar, the crowded room in the narrow alley or lane, washed out, if ever, with fetid water, and ventilated, if at all, with foul air, these have much more to do than has been heretofore supposed with those habits of idleness and intemperance which lead naturally to abject poverty, and which are prevailing forms of immorality. These are homes in which the virtues taught in Christian schools and churches can scarcely fail to droop and wither. Reform them; replace them by tenements dry, airy, well-drained, well-ventilated, abundantly supplied by pure soft water, and having at least so many chambers as to allow of a decent separation between the different members of each family; not omitting other indispensable means of promoting health and self-respect; do this in town and in country, give every facility for doing it everywhere. And though there may still ever be Rich and Poor, the latter will have learned to look upon the former as the authors of the greatest boon that man can receive of man; more than increase of wealth, more than increase of health; even larger scope, and better opportunity, and stronger motives, and greater powers, than ever before available, to help themselves, and to reform their own vices, and to elevate their own condition, and to practise, and bequeath to their children an example of practising, those virtues and graces, which dignify all ranks of life, and which tend to qualify all men for eternity.

# ON INSTITUTIONS FOR ADULT EDUCATION.

BY THE REV. DR. HOOK,

VICAR OF LEEDS.

A LECTURE DELIVERED AT A CHURCH INSTITUTE.

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THE subject to which I propose to call your attention is one of great and of increasing importance—the necessity of providing institutions for the instruction of those who, having received all the education which our primary schools are capable of affording, are desirous of penetrating further into the regions of literature or science. It will be seen from the enunciation of my subject, that what are commonly called adult schools will not fall within the scope of my observations—or, at all events, can only demand a passing remark.

Adult schools are, I trust, fast dying away, if they be not actually extinct. When I imply a hope that such is the case, I do not intend to speak in depreciation of the good that has been effected by adult schools; and I only desire their extinction from the fact of their becoming unnecessary.

When the public attention had been forcibly directed to the duty of making provision for the suitable education of the young, the elder brothers, the parents, and sometimes even the grandsires of the children admitted into our schools, became frequently desirous of receiving instruction—at least, so far as to be able to read the Bible, and to follow in the Prayer Book the services of the church. To meet these requirements, adult schools were opened, and they who conducted them felt a peculiar satisfaction in superintending the humble studies of their antiquated scholars, who—



With spectacles on nose, and pouch on side,  
 . . . their big manly voice  
 Turning again toward childish treble,

lisp'd the alphabet, and stammered forth the pence table. Such a school existed in the city of Coventry. It was well conducted, and great good it effected; but at the period of my quitting that parish, that school was filled, not as formerly, with aged men, seeking to supply the defects of past neglect, but with young men from fifteen to twenty-five years of age, whose object was to carry on and to complete the education they had already commenced.

The school when thus occupied was quite as useful as it had been before; but its character was changed; and its history confirms my position, that while, with the advance of education, schools for giving the same instruction to the aged as we are accustomed to give to the young will become unnecessary; from the same cause the demand will become irresistible for institutions, in which those who have passed through our primary schools may pursue their studies, and, in so doing, obtain an acquaintance with the principles upon which their art depends, and with the properties of those bodies upon which they are called to operate; or, if such be their inclination, cultivate those literary tastes which are—

The source of every gentle art,  
 And all the soft civility of life.

In short, we want for the working classes institutions similar to those which the more opulent, when they quit school, find prepared for them in our universities. It is astonishing how soon the mind runs to seed, and how quickly, when the waters cease to rise, the well becomes hard and dry. I make no doubt but that there are many who have felt mortification, as I have done, at finding, after the lapse of ten or fifteen years, how some of those children who were at one time the ornament of our schools, have, for want of continued mental cultivation, become as void of intelligence as their worst educated associates. If it is worth while to give an education, it is worth while to take care that the education given is not thrown away. If it is our duty to

instruct the *children* of the working classes, it is equally our duty to afford to adults the means of reaping the advantages of their past labour and youthful industry. The truth of this has been perceived, and attempts have been made to fill up the void of which the complaint is not infrequent; but the attempt has not been made on a scale commensurate to the requirements of the case. Or if the institutions for adult education at present in existence be sufficient in number and magnitude for the present wants of the people, the quality of the education provided is lamentably deficient; and the deficiency becomes daily more apparent, as the quality of education in our primary schools, under trained and certificated masters, becomes more effective.

To meet the requirements of the case, the Mechanics' Institutes were first in the field. This honour they may claim, and it should be willingly assigned to them.

It is more amusing than edifying to refer to the little controversies which have existed among the more enthusiastic advocates of Mechanics' Institutions, with reference to the claim of paternity asserted in behalf of some of their earliest supporters. To the honour of being the founder of the system, more than one aspirant appears on the page of history. But when we investigate the subject, the question occurs, of what were they founders? What was founded? Mechanics' Institutions, at the present time, are attended 'by persons of a different rank than those for whom it was first designed,' as their enthusiastic and interesting historian, Dr. Hudson, states. You will see there an assemblage of men of middle age, principals of firms, professional men, managing and confidential clerks, factors, brokers, agents, and wholesale shopkeepers, who form the directory and the majority of the association. This is as it should be. It is desirable to have an institution open to all classes, to encourage the intermixing of the employers and the employed, and to teach people to understand that we cannot benefit one class of the community without at the same time conferring a benefit upon society at large. We should endeavour to encourage—

The first paternal virtue, public zeal,  
Which throws o'er all an equal wide survey,  
And, ever musing on the common weal,  
Still labours glorious with some great design.

But although we consider this to be an advantage, and a system much to be encouraged, still it was not only not what the originators of Mechanics' Institutions, in 1823, designed, but it is precisely what they designed to prevent. 'The class of persons,' says Mr. Duppa, 'for whom Mechanics' Institutions were originally designed was, as the name indicates, mechanics or workmen.\*' And in the inaugural address on the opening of the London Mechanics' Institution, Dr. Birkbeck found it necessary to insert, in the *Mechanics' Magazine*, the following sentence:—'I boldly declare that the scientific cultivation of the mind of the mechanic was and still continues to be my ONLY object.' 'The objects of these institutions are,' said Sir Benjamin Heywood, in his address at the opening of the new building of the Manchester Mechanics' Institution, 'to teach the workman, be his trade what it may, those principles of science on which his work depends, to show him their practical application, and how he may make his knowledge of them profitable; to enable him thoroughly to understand his business, and to qualify him for making improvements in it; to teach him how he may advance himself in the world, and to give himself an honourable and delightful employment for his leisure.' The preamble of the Manchester Mechanics' Institution states, 'That the society is formed for the purpose of enabling mechanics and artizans, of whatever trade they may be, to become acquainted with such branches of science as are of practical application in the exercise of that trade; that they may possess a more thorough knowledge of their business, acquire a greater degree of skill in the practice of it, and be qualified to make improvements, and even new inventions, in the arts they respectively profess.' For these purposes, Mechanics' Institutions, as they at present exist, are of little use, because the instruction given at them is insufficient; nor for these

\* Duppa, *Manual of Mechanics' Institutions*.

purposes do mechanics, in any great numbers, resort to them. So exclusive was the society designed to be, that many of those who first extended to it their patronage strongly urged the necessity, not only of confining the members to mechanics and artizans, but to place the whole management in their hands, and in their hands only. This was a favourite object with the *Mechanics' Magazine*, with the editors or authors of which the idea of the Metropolitan Mechanics' Institution originated. The proposal was decidedly objectionable, as it tended to encourage what we ought to endeavour to annihilate—a class feeling; and it had the additional disadvantage of being impracticable. This the sagacity of the northern intellect immediately perceived; and one of the earliest advocates of Mechanics' Institutes, in Leeds, was censured in the *Mechanics' Magazine* for having the boldness to observe: 'As the most prominent feature of the establishment would be the regular delivery of lectures, we apprehend it would not be easy to find persons in this town at once qualified and disposed to lecture; and they cannot be engaged from other places but at a heavy expense. In Edinburgh and Glasgow, where some of the professors of the university have lectured gratuitously, and where scientific men are very abundant, this difficulty is not experienced. To procure a collection of models, too, and a scientific library, both of them indispensable appendages of such an institution, would involve considerable cost. It is necessary, therefore, that both the opulent and the working classes should combine their efforts with extraordinary spirit, to render the proposed institution practicable.'\*

There was indeed, in the originators of the Mechanics Institution, a singular absence of the power of organization, and all that they attempted was to form clubs of working men, subject to the same laws as those which regulate other voluntary associations for literary and scientific purposes. And the language applied to Dr. Birkbeck by those who regarded him as the founder of Mechanics' Institutions was absurdly hyperbolic, when it was stated that he had

\* *The Leeds Mercury*, 1823.

‘opened a new line of communication between man and the universe of mind.’ It will be presently seen that it is with no unfriendly feelings that I make this observation ; but, rather, it is from my desire for the further development and improvement of Mechanics’ Institutions, that I am very anxious to oppose the attempt which is sometimes made to enlist on their side those feelings through which we become attached to ancient foundations, connected with honourable names, and through the excess of which men pass on from the position of reasonable admirers into that of irrational bigots. Neither do we wish to detract from the merit which is justly due to those who, when the Mechanics’ Institution was first projected, extended to it their support, and aided it with their subscriptions. There were displayed no foresight, no genius for organization, no legislative power, such as we find to have existed in those persons to whom we are indebted for some of our greatest national institutions. But the praise must be given to the ready patrons of Mechanics’ Institutions, which is justly due to kind and generous spirits, who, in spite of suspicion and reproach, come boldly forward to render assistance to their fellow-creatures less fortunately circumstanced, when, by honourable exertion and a noble self-denial, they seek the elevation of their character both intellectually and morally. The historical facts are easily and briefly to be stated. When the improved education in schools for the working classes, though much inferior to what it now is, began to tell upon the minds of the artizans, a want was felt, and a demand was made for some institution having for its end the objects so ably stated in the documents I have already read. This was the case especially in Birmingham, in Glasgow, and in London ; to meet the demand, associations of mechanics were suggested, and the associations received the immediate and zealous support of Dr. Birkbeck, Mr. Webster, Mr. Leonard Horner, Sir John Herschel, Mr. Wedgewood, Sir Benjamin Heywood and, though last not least in our estimation, the earnest and consistent advocate of education, Henry Brougham. These had the honour of being the earliest patrons of the Mechanics’ Institutions, but they were not the founders of what

there was nothing to found ; for there is no peculiarity of constitution or organization to distinguish these institutions from any other voluntary association, unless we regard as its peculiarity the attempt to confine them to a single class, which was soon found to be impracticable, and, if it had been practicable, would have been mischievous.

The first Mechanics' Institution for England was suggested in a well-written article of the *Mechanics' Magazine* for 1823. It was resolved to form such an institution at a large meeting held in the metropolis in the November of the same year, and the institution was opened in form in the following December. The example of the metropolis was soon followed in the provinces, and associations of a similar character and for the same purpose were formed in our large towns ; although, until the year 1837, no attempt was made to bring the different independent associations into union for the sake of correspondence and mutual support.

And now having accorded the praise which is due to those who extended their early patronage to this important movement, it is necessary to state why the Tory party, and with them generally the churchmen of the country, stood aloof, and regarded these institutions with feelings of distrust, if not with dislike. The fact is sometimes unfairly laid hold of as a subject for political declamation, or in order to misrepresent the principles and feelings of those who stood aloof from the Mechanics' Institutions, as if they were unfriendly to the education of the people ; an accusation, the injustice of which is fully established by facts ; for who are silently and effectually carrying on the work of education at the present moment ? The answer may be given by a most impartial if not an unwilling witness, the Committee of Privy Council. The committee would gladly distribute the money placed at their disposal by the parliamentary grant, in equal proportions to the church of England and to the other religious communities ; but as the money is to be distributed in proportion to the self-sacrifice made by the friends of education in different localities, the committee is obliged to disperse three-fourths of the money placed in their hands, for the maintenance of schools erected and

supported by members of the church of England. Facts speak more forcibly than the eloquence of a Demosthenes, and these facts should silence the most eloquent of our calumniators. We know that

The mind untaught  
Is a dark waste, where fiends and tempest howl;  
As Phœbus to the world, is knowledge to the soul.

We know, also, that while sermons may be addressed to the illiterate, it requires some cultivation of mind to enter into the beauties of our Liturgy and appreciate properly the merits of our various formularies; we therefore must perceive that the church as well as the state is interested in the education of the people; that it is easier to work on mind than on matter, when we would persuade men to accept the salvation offered to us by the mercy of God; that, as knowledge advances, our churches become better attended; and that if secular knowledge be insufficient, as it undoubtedly is, it prepares the way for the knowledge of the things of God; 'the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.' By the progress of intelligence among the people, religion—and of all forms of religion, that of the church of England—will be the gainer; our enemies may become more powerful, but our friends, equally advancing in that power which is the result of knowledge, will become more numerous. This we must believe, if we believe our system to be, of all ecclesiastical and theological systems, the best. By other influences the cause of Christianity and of vital religion may be damaged, but not by the intellectual advancement of the people.

Refuting, by an appeal to facts as well as by arguments, the calumny which would represent us as not friendly to the advance of education, because we have not, to any great extent, been advocates of Mechanics' Institutions, let us now by reference to facts seek to ascertain the reason why, among churchmen and conservatives, few were found among the early supporters of those societies. We cannot but observe, that, in all that relates to public life, the minds intent upon

the public good are to be divided into two great classes : those *sanguine* minds which are directed to the progress of society and the improvement of our national and social institutions ; and those *cautious* minds which, not unwilling to move, always move slowly, lest, in seeking to advance, we lose what we at present possess : persons in the former class are warned by those of the latter, lest they become like the dog who, in grasping at the shadow, lost the reality ; and persons in the latter class are warned by those in the former, lest, while shivering on the bank, in their fear to take a plunge into the running stream, they catch a cold and die.

It was natural that the men of sanguine temperament should at once take up the idea, when Mechanics' Institutions were first suggested to their minds : and it was as natural, that those who were constitutionally cautious should pause before committing themselves to the undertaking. It would have been well if the latter, without losing their caution, had been a little more active ; and certainly, if the former, with a cautious view to futurity, had well considered their plans before carrying them into execution, we might have possessed at this time what we certainly have not—an institution adapted to the purposes of adult education.

It is to the metaphysical fact now stated that we may trace the existence in this country of what has been the blessing of the country—those two great parties in the state which are styled respectively the Whig party and the Tory. The Whig party is the party of progress, the Tory party is the party of caution : and to the fact of their being very fairly balanced the one against the other, we may trace much of our national prosperity ; our steady, but at the same time cautious, advancement in our social and political condition. If one of these parties had possessed power exclusively, we should have been hurried into revolution : if the other, we should have been plunged into a despotism which would have rendered revolution a necessary evil, but a justifiable act. But in the equal balance of parties, the



one party has professed to hold the virtues without the faults of the other, and Whigs have become cautious in their desire of progress; and of progress, in spite of their caution, Tories have been the advocates. Such being the case, there are many things in which the two great parties are able to unite, and in nothing can this be done more effectually than in furthering the cause of education. Why, then, in regard to the subject before us, was not this union effected in 1823 between the two great parties in the state? We must revert to the history of the times in order that we may obtain a satisfactory answer, and at the same time rebut the charge that the fault rested with the Conservatives. We must bear in mind, that a revolutionary spirit prevailed to a very great extent among large classes of the people at the period to which we are referring; and while the party of caution became, on this account, doubly cautious, the party of progress, without wishing to revolutionize, were showing much sympathy with the revolutionists. Neither was there the moderation displayed at that time which now exists among leading men on either side, when there is a disposition to merge differences where principles are not concerned, and to confer together for the public good. The two great parties were at that time factions in the state, and what was done by one side was viewed with suspicion by the other, and no attempt was lost to place a rival in the wrong. Such being the case, let us see how matters stood. There were some good and honest-hearted men who cared not for faction, but really desired to promote the welfare of the working classes; and these strongly urged the exclusion from Mechanics' Institutions of party politics and party feeling. This was pressed upon the members of the institution by Dr. Birkbeck himself, and to preserve the institution free from political bias was the advice given by Dr. Olinthus Gregory. The Duke of Sussex, in presiding at the opening of the hall in London, warned the members, 'that anything like debating upon political and theological subjects would be at once seized upon for their destruction as a body.' This was as it should be. We should feel no sympathy with those, on the

one hand, who regarded such advice as a piece of policy to place their political opponents in a wrong position, when they refused to unite in the furtherance of an object admitted to be good; or with those, on the other, who argued from the strength of the appeal, that the danger of a political character attaching to the institution was perceived and dreaded by personages who, from political motives, unwillingly extended to it their support. But we must admit, that the party of caution were justified in regarding these addresses as the mere ebullition of individual benevolence, when in the very article of the *Mechanics' Magazine* which recommended the establishment of a Mechanics' Institution, such sentiments as the following were propounded:—'The British government has hitherto been always so much occupied in devising means to secure its power, that it has been able to pay but little attention to the instruction of the people; nor do we wish that it should. The education of a free people, like their property, will always be directed most beneficially for them when it is in their own hands; when government interferes, it directs its efforts more to make men obedient and docile than wise and happy. It desires to control the thoughts and to fashion even the minds of its subjects; and to give into its hands the power of educating the people, is the widest possible extension of the most pernicious practice, which has so long desolated society, of allowing one or a few men to direct the actions and control the conduct of millions. Men had better be without education (properly so called, for nature herself teaches us many valuable truths), than be educated by their rulers; for then education is but the mere breaking in of the steer to the yoke; the mere discipline of the hunting dog, which, by dint of severity, is made to forego the strongest impulse of his nature, and instead of devouring his prey, hasten with it to the feet of his master . . . . . They of the upper can know little or nothing of what the lower classes need, or what is fitting for them. They know indeed too well what is fitting for them as subjects, as tax-paying machines, as slaves, but not what is suitable to them as men.'

It could not be forgotten that the magazine in which the idea of the Mechanics' Institute was first started, and in which these and other similar sentiments were propounded, was described by Dr. Birkbeck, in his inaugural address, as 'the most valuable gift which the hand of science had ever given to the artisan.' Neither could it fail to be observed that men of the most revolutionary principles, such as Cobbett, Gale Jones, and the two Evanses, were received with peculiar enthusiasm by the first members of the Institute. I do, then, maintain that it is not to be wondered at that the party of caution and the friends of social order kept aloof from a society so patronised, and that they felt their suspicions to be confirmed by the fact that the hall of the Metropolitan Mechanics' Institute was advertised to be let on Sundays, and became the forum of the Owenites, the Cobbites, the Huntites, and the anti-religionists, Carlile and Taylor. I do not, as I said before, allude to these circumstances in any hostile spirit towards Mechanics' Institutions, for, as it will be presently seen, my feelings towards them are far from being unfriendly; but because it is most important to place clearly before you the reasons why, when Mechanics' Institutions were first started, the party of caution were fully justified in withholding their support, and in pausing to see what would be the result of a movement with respect to the *professed* object of which there could be among philanthropists but one opinion. Let there be no recriminations, if we wish for union, which is the object which your lecturer has in view. I have praised the philanthropists who threw themselves into the movement, regardless of the consequences; and let equal praise be accorded to those who, in foresight of the consequences, withheld their support. Both parties wished well to their country; and if the time has now arrived when both can unite, without concession of principle, in the furtherance of a common end, those who contribute to such a union will deserve the blessing which pertains especially to peacemakers.

So much for Mechanics' Institutions: we come now to Church Institutions. It is not a fair or legitimate method of stating the case, to represent Church Institutions as insti-

tutions established simply to oppose the Mechanics' Institute. With the history of several I am personally acquainted, and I can safely say that they were established to meet a public want, and not to create a controversy; in the spirit of peace, not of warfare. Their *position*, indeed, is, in some respects, antagonistic to that of the Mechanics' Institutes, and from that circumstance controversies have been sometimes provoked; but this has been always an accident, not a design, and Church Institutions have generally pursued their course with noiseless step, but not, on that account, without abundant advantage to those for whose welfare they were intended. The want of education for the adults who had left our schools was felt. The mode supplying that want in the Mechanics' Institutions was not approved. It was impossible to recommend our young men to associates such as I have already described. An unobjectionable institution was, therefore, designed; and it had this advantage over its older rival, that, while encouraging literature, and providing scientific instruction, the science of theology could be admitted into its lecture-rooms, and theological publications might adorn its library. With one of the first, if not the very first, Church Institution I was myself closely connected. It was established at Coventry, and, in our anxiety not to give unnecessary offence, we called it the Religious and Useful Knowledge Society. Many young men had complained that, in seeking mental improvement, they had resorted to the Mechanics' Institute, where political topics were frequently brought under discussion in a manner offensive to their feelings, while a spirit hostile to religion, and especially to the Church, prevailed. They proposed, therefore, and carried their proposal into effect, to establish another society in connexion with the Church. To the history of this Church Society, with which I was more immediately concerned, and which, having been established twenty years ago, is, perhaps, of all Church Institutions, the oldest, I have referred, because I believe that the circumstances under which the Society for promoting Religious Useful Knowledge came into existence are nearly the circumstances which have attended the formation of all the

Church Institutions which have of late years been established in our towns and manufacturing districts.

Having adverted at some length to the history of these two institutions, a passing notice will suffice for the various minor institutions which, with the object in view of extending the advantages of a superior education to the working classes, are for the most parts the offspring of the Mechanics' Institute, whose quarrel with the parent society has been that its tendencies have become too aristocratic, and which often take their rise in mere class feeling and pride. But the question to be asked and answered is, whether any of these societies, or all of them combined, are capable of meeting unaided the wants of the people, and the exigencies of the times. You can provide public lectures, either given gratuitously or for a small remuneration to the occasional lecturer. Such lectures are important to awaken attention to particular subjects, and to illustrate certain sciences by the exhibition of experiments on an extended scale; they are interesting in pointing out to those whose pursuits are literary the excellences of a particular author, as when my Lord Carlisle delivered before the Mechanics' Institute of Leeds his lecture on the 'Poetry of Alexander Pope;' they are useful as stimulants to study, but they are rather the reward, or the recreation, of students, than the sources of their knowledge: they do not supersede that instruction which must be given, line upon line, and precept upon precept, in classes. In short, while public lectures, such as that which I have the honour of delivering at the present time, have their utility and their place, the word lecture should, in general, be understood in the same sense in which it is understood in our English Universities, where it is a more dignified term to signify a lesson. You can, to a certain extent, meet this requirement also; and in most of our institutions classes are formed. But what is the quality of the education given in them? There are more than 120 societies in the Yorkshire Union of Mechanics' Institutes, and these have classes for instruction; but, on reference to the Returns, I do not find above four in which instruction is given in the higher departments of literature and science,

and the instruction given in most of the classes is spoken of as elementary. These classes are, indeed, succeeding to the place of the old adult schools, and are giving instruction, for the most part, to those whose early education has been neglected. In the Report from the Huddersfield Mechanics' Institute, an interesting account is given of two railway labourers, who have availed themselves of the Institution there to make up the deficiencies occasioned by their former neglect. But these, though useful, are not what we require with reference to the present subject, and it is absurd to speak of them as answering the end for which Mechanics' Institutions were called into existence. What I have said of Mechanics' Institutes I may also say of Church Institutes, without fear of contradiction, though of these societies there are no official returns such as we possess in the Report of the Yorkshire Union of Mechanics' Institutes. Elementary classes will become every year less requisite, as the quality of education in our primary schools increases; and the demand for more scientific instruction must increase, or, at all events, it might be freely provided. To meet these wants there will be required:—

- I. Collegiate buildings of sufficient size, according to the circumstances of the locality.
- II. A Museum.
- III. A Library, not merely to circulate books among members or to supply them with books of reference, but for the use of the classes, which implies the possession of many works on the subject of each separate Lecture.
- IV. Lessons or Lectures to be regularly given in each department of Literature and Science by professional Lecturers.
- V. A uniform system of management under a head, or principal, to whom the other professors shall be subordinate.

The gratuitous services of persons who are willing to offer them may always be accepted: they are advantageous to those who offer them as well as to those who accept them; like the quality of mercy, they are twice blessed,

they bless both him that gives and him that takes. But gratuitous teachers cannot be depended upon, and they are to be received rather as assistants than as principals. If you look to gratuitous teachers you must be seeking an inferior article; for intellectual power, when duly cultivated, has its marketable value, and he who offers his services gratuitously would make teaching his primary occupation if he felt himself qualified for the rank of a professor. Or, if he be a man of superior and cultivated mind, he is engaged in some other pursuit, and his class, though an important, is still with him a secondary consideration, to which he gives the fag end of his time and an already exhausted mind.

In a teacher is requisite not only a competent knowledge of his subject but an aptness to teach, which can only be acquired, generally speaking, by those who make teaching their sole occupation and study.

We demand for the working classes the best article, and the best article you cannot afford. There is only one Mechanics' Institute which has any pretensions to meet the wants of the people, and that is the Huddersfield Institute. Complaints are made of an exhibition of unfriendly feelings towards the Church in that institution; but as regards the management of it, and its efficiency, if we may judge from the statements made in the report, too much cannot be said in its praise. In this institution there are twelve paid teachers, and many who give their services gratuitously. But, with reference to the latter, we are to observe that there are circumstances of peculiar advantage under which this institution is placed. It can command the services of the masters of the Huddersfield College; that is to say, of men who receive a sufficient payment for educated talent, and, consequently, the extraordinary success of this institution only proves the rule, that however ready we may be to receive gratuitous teachers, they must act in subordination to professional teachers. But if professional teachers are required, they must be men of education superior to that of the certificated masters in our primary schools, and persons receiving, therefore, a

higher salary. It will, indeed, be a legitimate object of ambition to the masters of schools to rise to these professorial chairs, if they shall be established. If the professors are permitted, as they ought to be, to add to their income by private tuition, their attendance for instruction in an institution being chiefly required in the evening; still they must have secured to them an income of not less than two hundred pounds a-year; and for the principal, whose time would be devoted entirely to the institution, a larger salary would be requisite. I do not see how smaller salaries can be offered to men who have already expended so much in educating themselves; and you will remember that what we desire is to secure for the working classes the very best education when they desire to obtain it. And how can funds sufficient be raised? The rooms, the library, the museum, all are to be kept up, and where are the salaries for professors to be found in the existing institutions? In most places the institutions, both the Mechanics and the Church Institutions, are only at present sustained by much canvassing, direct or indirect. Popular lectures on amusing subjects, lions exhibited at anniversaries, soireés, concerts, and conversaciones, are all legitimate, and, as we do not wish to make our Jack a dull boy, we must give him play as well as work. But in these things there is generally an eye to the increase of the funds, and it is to be suspected that the treasurer, however grave a personage he may be, is almost always among the foremost to suggest a little interesting and well-paying novelty in the way of amusement, to those who seldom or never, except on such occasions, darken the walls of the institute. And yet, after all these exertions, what do we find? The income of the Mechanics Institute at Barnsley amounts to 125*l.*; at Beverley, 55*l.*; at Pontefract, 30*l.*; at Dewsbury, 30*l.*; at Ripon, 80*l.*; and, even at Sheffield, only to 121*l.* At Bradford the contributions only amount to 383*l.*; at York to 282*l.*; at Wakefield to 280*l.*; and, if in Leeds, the income amounts to upwards of 1400*l.*, while we venture to flatter ourselves that we take the lead of our neighbours, we are not to forget that our population is not less in the



township of Leeds than eighty-eight thousand. These sums are taken from the report of the Yorkshire Union of Mechanics Institutes. With respect to Church Institutes, I have been unable to obtain any statement of their income; but, as it does not exceed, if it equals this, I have said enough to show that the joint income of both societies would be insufficient, at present, to provide for the working classes the kind of institution they have a right to demand. This income is, moreover, fluctuating and uncertain, and we may confidently assert that an institution which depends upon a fluctuating income will not be able to secure the services of that class of men whose services are required. A speculator may come on the chance of realizing a livelihood, but a professor of high character would require some security for a fixed income—at least to a certain amount. You see at once what is absolutely necessary—viz., a permanent income. The question, then, is, how can this permanent income be raised? As far as I can see, we can only procure a permanent income, that is to say, we can only establish the institution we require by having recourse to one of the three measures which I shall proceed to lay before you. I. A permanent income might be secured by means of a parliamentary grant. A parliamentary grant might possibly be secured, as the amount of money required would not be great, to furnish incomes for professors in towns and populous places, where a hall has been already built, a library established, and a museum commenced. These latter might fairly be charged to the income arising from subscriptions and donations. But, if a parliamentary grant were made, the government, through whose instrumentality it would be distributed, would have to select some one institution upon which to bestow the benefit; and there can be no doubt that the Mechanics' Institute would be selected. The priority of its existence would justly entitle it to the first consideration, and we may be sure that no public grant could be made to a society placed on a basis less broad. But Conservatives and Churchmen could only come into this arrangement, with the understanding that, through officers appointed by government, security should be given

that the strictest neutrality should be observed in all that relates both to politics and religion ; and I very greatly fear that among the most zealous supporters of Mechanics Institutes there still exists such a morbid dread of government interference, that to such a proposal as this the strongest feelings of hostility would be excited. It is not proposed to take the management of such an institution out of the hands of a local committee, but merely to subject them to control from a distance, in order to secure impartiality in administration, and to afford protection against abuse. Whether this dread of government interference will ever die away, we cannot at present do more than conjecture and hope. In one or two instances Government Schools of Design have been tolerated, and there no longer exists an intolerance of aristocratic patronage. We may, therefore, trust that this feeling *will* die away, but I dare not say that it is extinct ; and we must, therefore, pass on to the consideration of some other plan. II. A permanent income might be raised by liberal donations among the friends of the Church ; and in supplying the wants of the people the Church Institutes would then take the lead of the Mechanics' Institutes. It would then, however, be necessary that we should open our doors as widely as possible, and assume a less distinctive title. That I should be glad to see this accomplished I need scarcely say, but I must add, that I believe such a scheme to be quite impracticable. The follies of which, we must admit, too many who profess Church principles, though often not the principles of the Reformed Church of England, have of late been guilty, have had the effect of making men suspicious and cautious ; and many of our larger donors would be opposed to the support of any such institution as would appear to assume an exclusive character. III. The third measure which may be adopted is that of uniting with the managers of the Mechanics' Institutes, and, by a combined effort, of effecting what we in common desire. You will observe that I am not proposing any definite measure ; I am only, in a real desire to further a great object, throwing out, among friends, a few topics for consideration and

thought. Would not something like the following be practicable, if we could prevail upon men to lay aside party prejudice and passion? An institution in each large town, endowed with a permanent income, in which lectures may be given, and classes formed, under highly-educated, and consequently well remunerated, professors, with the understanding that controverted points in politics and religion should be excluded: in connexion with this, institutions attached to every church, and to the chapels of all denominations, if the congregations so please, in which instruction may be given on the points excluded from the more general institution, such as those which relate to ecclesiastical history, and the dogmas of our most holy religion. If this were accomplished, our large towns would exhibit the appearance of a university with a variety of colleges attached. I need not consider details in relation to a non-existing institution, but means might be devised, one would hope, to bring all parties to act in harmony, when harmonious action would be so conducive to the benefit of all. Although controverted points in politics and in religion would, of necessity, be excluded from the general institution, yet the existence of the institutions attached to churches and to chapels would be a constant warning to the students that it is instruction on certain points of science that they are to seek in the general institution, not education; education would be the result of the whole system, and the education, taken as a whole, would be religious. In alluding to the possibility of such a plan, I am not considering what would be best under any conceivable circumstances, but what, under given circumstances, may be practicable. All that I desire is, to make provision for the working classes, that they may, if they will, carry on their mental culture when they have quitted our primary schools. And it is on this account that I wish to see a good understanding established between Church Institutes and Mechanics' Institutes; such as, in the end, may conduce to a cordial co-operation among all who are one in the desire of adding to the facilities of adult education. If we are to co-operate, there must, of course, be concessions made on both sides;

and I think I may safely say that among churchmen generally, and, certainly, among the practical portion of the clergy, those who have daily to contend with difficulties, as distinguished from those who, in their honest zeal for theories, know not how difficult it sometimes is to carry them out, there is an increasing desire to act in union with Mechanics' Institutes, and even to give them their support. And what is required from the Mechanics' Institutes? Nothing more than to act under their professed principles. In Leeds I believe that this is done to a very great extent. A committee was, in that town, appointed of the members of our ruri-decanal chapter, about two years ago, to examine into the working of our Mechanics' Institute, and, after a careful investigation, the report was—'That a great number of young members of the Church were members of the institute; that no books of an immoral or irreligious tendency were admitted into the library; and that, generally, the working of the institute was not unfavourable to religion, but rather had a tendency to improve the moral, as well as the intellectual character of the members.'

On this report being presented to the chapter, several of the clergy of Leeds joined the Mechanics' Institute; and, though some have kept aloof from it, we have been careful not to act in hostility to it. At the same time, I am constrained to say, that, from the reports I have received from several quarters, the result of our inquiries has not been always so satisfactory. Neutrality, though professed, has, in many places, not been observed: in the discussions, offensive principles have been asserted without rebuke; and, while books, newspapers, and periodicals of an objectionable character have been admitted into the reading-rooms, those have been excluded which could have supplied the antidote.

If there be among the friends of Mechanics' Institutes, as I am sure in the majority of instances there is, a desire, by conciliation, to make their association extensively useful, care must be taken to guard against these abuses. In the meantime, as the following letter will show, the friends of the Mechanics' Institutes throw back a portion of the blame

upon us. The letter is written by a valued friend of mine, who, while a liberal in politics, is not only a churchman, but one who has shown himself ready to sacrifice political influence to defend the Church when it has been unjustly assailed.

Mr. Hope Shaw, in answer to the objections which I have stated, writes thus:—‘An explanation of principles seems naturally to range itself under two heads—lectures and discussions, books and periodicals; classes are a great, and indeed the most important, department in these institutions, but I do not understand that any complaint is made with reference to them. As to lectures and discussions, we exclude religious and political topics. If either of these topics were introduced in the course of a discussion, it would be the duty of the chairman to interfere; but during the nine years I have been a member of the Leeds Institution, for two of which I was President, no instance has, to my recollection, occurred where such interposition was called for; and I know but of one instance during that long time in which a complaint, on either religious or political grounds, has been made against a lecture. In that instance a lecturer from a great distance, unaware of our sensitiveness on this point, and without any intention or idea of offence, adverted to the various religious systems of past and present times in the course of his lecture, and classed Christianity amongst the rest, without any such distinction as conveyed an acknowledgment of its authority as a Divine Revelation. This circumstance, in itself to be greatly regretted, produced a result which might almost change the regret into rejoicing, for it elicited an expression of feeling from a considerable number of our members, which amply proved that they would not tolerate any disrespect towards Christianity. As to books, as a general rule, controversial Divinity is excluded; but if historical, scientific, or literary works contain, as many do, religious matter, that would be no ground for exclusion, though the religion might be controvertible. The rule applies only to books which have controversy for their object. Works which are regarded as part of the literature of the age, though containing objectionable opinions, are certainly admissible. The *Nemesis*

*of Faith*, which had been inadvertently admitted into the Leeds Institution, was withdrawn by the committee as soon as its real character became known. As to periodicals, such as reviews, magazines, newspapers, &c., a controversial character in these publications is, of course, no ground for exclusion. If it were, hardly one of them could be admitted. Exclusion being impossible, we aim at impartiality. But my idea of impartiality by no means implies that a given number of publications on one side is always to be balanced by an equal number on the other. Amongst publications in themselves admissible, the managing committee must choose; and I should consider a committee impartial, if its choice were not influenced by a predilection for particular views upon controverted points in religion and politics, but was made solely with reference to the convenience of the members of the institution. Two committees, acting for institutions differently circumstanced, may differ widely from each other in their selection of periodicals, and yet be equally impartial. The committee are not entitled to the absolute discretion which a donor of books has, as to the books he will give. They are not donors, but trustees; the money placed at their disposal is not their own, but that of the subscribers who have voluntarily contributed it; and they should endeavour so to apply it as to meet the reasonable expectations, as well as promote the improvement, of the subscribers to whom it belongs. The gratification of our members, within due limits, is, in fact, essential to the success of its attempt at their improvement. The number which a committee may order of any particular class of admissible publications should therefore vary with the number of subscribers who may wish to read them. If the proportion of Churchmen or of Conservatives in any institution be increased, the proportion of such publications as Churchmen or Conservatives prefer would, I have no doubt, be correspondingly increased. If by standing aloof Churchmen and Conservatives leave a great majority of the institution on the opposite side, they should not be surprised at the majority of the periodicals in that institution being also on the opposite side.

‘ I cannot,’ continues Mr. Shaw, ‘ too strongly express my conviction that it is highly desirable for the Clergy to join these institutions, as I am glad to see that they appear to be gradually doing. I do not think it desirable that they should take so active a part in management as to commit themselves to minor details ; but rather to give that general sanction which would practically secure for them a salutary moral influence over the general tone and character of the proceedings. I consider these institutions as one of the great advantages, as well as necessities, of our time ; but those who refuse them a place among the advantages, must, I conceive, concede one to them amongst the necessities. As a matter of fact, it must be admitted that all opposition to them has hitherto failed, and, unless my judgment is misled by what I admit to be my wishes, the success of future opposition is hopeless. For good or for evil, they are exercising, and, I believe, will exercise, a great influence over the intellectual and moral character of the present and next generation, which cannot prudently be neglected by any one—least of all by the Clergy.’ Every one will admit that in Mr. Hope Shaw the Mechanics’ Institute has an able, as well as zealous, advocate. I think that he exaggerates in his mind the influence which Mechanics’ Institutes exert over the rising generation, but I believe that the influence they *may* exercise, if the managers look, like Mr. Hope Shaw, not to party politics, but to the general good, may become very powerful ; on this ground I am very far from opposing them, but, without opposing, we may wish to see them improved, and in that wish my excellent friend will, I am sure, unite, when the only improvement we desire is to see them in all localities carrying out, in the manner described by him, the principles they profess, and acting with a liberality which shall not be one-sided. Nothing can be more clear than that, if we desire to secure the advantage of good institutions for the more industrious and highly-gifted of the working classes, the means of establishing them must come either from the donations of the wealthy in the shape of endowments, or, as I should prefer, from the public purse. In both cases union

and co-operation, without sacrifice of principles but with a surrender of prejudices, are of the first importance. For nothing can be more mistaken than the idea, so prevalent and popular when Mechanics' Institutions were first started, that by the zeal of artizans alone these institutions can be supported.

Even when Church Societies and Mechanics' Institutes have embraced, as they now do, the middle classes, and have invoked even the patronage of the aristocracy, the numbers are, comparatively speaking, very small of those who avail themselves of the advantages held out to them.

Of Church Institutions I have been unable to obtain the statistics; but from the returns of the Mechanics' Institutions I find only 364 members at Barnsley, out of a population of 12,000; only 876 at Bradford, out of a population of 34,560; only 334 at Sheffield, out of a population of 68,000; only 576 at Wakefield, out of a population of 14,000; and although in Leeds we can number 1852, this is in a Mechanics' Institution impartially managed, and out of a population of 88,741. And the number becomes smaller still, when we bear in mind that of these only a very few, comparatively speaking, attend the classes, while it is for the benefit of those who seek instruction in the classes that we seek to excite your sympathy. In the Report of the Yorkshire Union, complaint is made of the bad success of the classes,\* and of the indifference of the people to their own education.

I see, of course, that this, which I bring forward as argument for union, may be turned against us, as a proof that no exertions in this direction are necessary.

But you must bear in mind that we are not speaking of the general education of the people: we are only seeking to meet the wants of those who are entitled to our deepest sympathy, the elite of the working classes,—those who feel in themselves mental energy and power, and have a right to ask for the means of self-improvement. When national schools were first established, one of the arguments used against any education of the people was that we should

\* Page 13.



make men philosophers and poets, and that there would be no one to undertake the drudgery of life. The objectors excluded from their minds one important consideration, namely, that to obtain eminence in scientific pursuits, and to master the art of poetry, a man must submit to much mental drudgery, and that a large portion of mankind find it less irksome to work by the hand than by the head. Among young men of independent fortune, how many there are who prefer what some of us would think very hard drudgery, the labour of the hunting-field, to mental occupation or any sedentary pursuit: and to many operatives, handicraft is preferable to the pursuits of literature and science. Of those who go to our universities the very large majority are content with the minimum of what they are compelled to learn, and make little apparent use of it in after life. All that we can do, under any circumstances, is to offer advantages. It remains for those to whom we offer them to decide whether they will avail themselves of the proffered privileges or not. It is on this principle that we erect churches; *i. e.*, we offer spiritual advantages to all, though we know that they will be accepted by only a few; we open schools, though we know that many parents will not send their children to receive the instructions we are prepared to give; we establish penitentiaries, though they are the resort of only a few. It is, if with humble reverence we may advert to the fact, on this great and unaccountable law that the great God and Father of us all is pleased to act. Salvation is offered to all: many are called, but we are warned, only a few will be chosen. Every advantage which a rich man possesses he should, as far as in him lies, extend to others; he should place within their reach the opportunity of mental as well as spiritual improvement, and labour for the increase of their bodily comforts. We should also place ourselves in the position of others, and considering their reasonable wants and aspirations, do to them as we would be done by ourselves.

Let any one read that beautiful poem of Beattie, 'The Minstrel,' and he will feel impelled to take some such course as that which is now under consideration.

Ah! who can tell how many a soul sublime  
 Has felt the influence of malignant star,  
 And waged with fortune an eternal war!  
 Checked by the scoff of pride and envy's frown,  
 Or poverty's unconquerable bar,  
 In life's low vale remote, has pined alone,  
 And dropt into the grave unpitied and unknown.

Or let me refer to a poet better known. Gray's 'Elegy' is dear to our hearts for expressing so beautifully and tenderly *for* our hearts, what our hearts have often felt, but we have no power to express. Looking on the graves of the villagers, he says —

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid  
 Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;  
 Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,  
 Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

But knowledge to their eyes the ample page,  
 Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;  
 Chill penury repressed their noble rage,  
 And froze the genial current of the soul.

The applause of listening senates to command,  
 The threats of pain and ruin to despise,  
 To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,  
 And read their history in a nation's eyes,  
 Their lot forbad —.

To endeavour to alter the lot of such as these, and to afford to all the means of elevating their social position, and of conferring benefits on their fellow creatures, this is a noble ambition, to achieve which it is worth while to sacrifice many prejudices, and to risk some disappointments. Since we have got among the poets,—old-fashioned poets, whom modern poets have not in my opinion displaced,—I will call upon the author of the 'Night Thoughts' to sum up for me the matter of my discourse, and in his words would ask you to exert yourselves that—

Our needful knowledge, like our needful food,  
 Unhedged, lie open in life's common field,  
 And bid all welcome to the vital feast.

ON THE

DWELLINGS OF THE WORKING CLASSES  
IN BRITISH NORTH AMERICA.

BY THE REV. C. G. NICOLAY.

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IF the philologist might say, 'tell me the state of language in any country, and I will tell you the political condition and prospects of that country?' the philanthropist might with equal truth assert, 'tell me the condition of the dwellings of the working classes, and I will tell you the social state and prospects of the country.' In no place is this more true than in British North America; the dwellings of the working classes there might be assumed as typical of the characteristics peculiar to that country. But who are the working classes? Are we to understand the term as we should do here? Are we to look for the day field-labourer, almost 'adstrictus glebæ,' in the agricultural districts—the skilled mechanic and artisan in the towns? Every country has its own form to which labour is adapted. In the British North American provinces, it is in the one case dissimilar, and in the other similar to that with which we are familiar here, for while the mechanic and artisan there differ only from their fellow-workman at home in having higher proportionate wages and better prospects, the agricultural labourer of this country has no fellow there, and the only class which can be compared with that to which he belongs is the settler without money capital, who supplies that, his only want, by occasionally labouring for his richer neighbour, 'adstrictus glebæ,' indeed, in one sense, for the land on which he dwells is his own.

In many parts of our British North American colonies the custom obtains, once common among ourselves, for the children of the small landowners to join their richer neigh-

bours, live in their houses, and work for them until they have saved enough to settle for themselves on their own land—unless, indeed, as is not unfrequently the case, they obtain property by marriage into the family in which they are resident, or that of some neighbour; in either case, no long time can elapse before they pass from the class of labourers to that of proprietors, and as they are not treated as servants, but rather like children, they share all the advantages of the household.

For the most part, then, there are but two classes of dwellings for the working men of British North America—those of the town, and those of the country. Of both it may be premised, that to the mistaken habit of copying in them everything done in this country, may be attributed most of the evils we shall have to notice. It is most apparent, that if at home we are not yet fully awake to the errors of our own system, those who blindly copy are not likely to improve upon it; and if, as is but too evident, it is little suited to the condition of life for which it was intended, it is scarcely probable that it will be found more suited to a country in which, so far as climate is concerned, the difficulties to be conquered are considerably greater. If we are imperfectly provided against extremes of heat and cold in a comparatively mild and equable temperature, what protection will be afforded against extremes separated, possibly, by 120 degrees?

Of the dwellings of the mechanics and artisans in British North America little more need be said. They are not dissimilar to those of the same class here, except in so far as they derive advantage from being fewer in number in any locality, and in more immediate proximity to the open country, affording an escape for carbonic acid and a supply of oxygen favourable to health; with respect to drainage, both may be about on a par. There is, it is true, a difference in the material in favour of the dwellings of this class at home,—brick affords more protection both against cold and heat, than wood, especially when, as is usually the case, the construction is simply that of a light frame covered over with a still lighter integument of plank or clap-boards, which are, though not to the same extent, liable to warp and

crack under the alternate influence of cold and heat, both in extreme. If, however, we were to examine the internal comforts, we should find the balance much to the credit of colonial life in this class, as in all others but the highest—a greater abundance of the necessaries of life—more leisure—absence of fear for the future—good education, and full employment from home, if required, for children—combine, with other advantages, not directly bearing on our subject, to render the colonist less liable to the attacks of sickness, and the premature advance of old age, than his fellow-workman at home. In his life, however, there is not so much that is characteristic of the country in which he resides as there is in that of the agricultural labourer, and of this their dwellings are sufficient evidences ; in the one, the visitor might transport himself in imagination to the homes of his fatherland—in the other, the realities of his position are ever before him. And yet on the whole the latter is preferable : the mechanic or artisan is the servant of the public, and such he will ever remain—individuals of the class may escape from it and become independent, but they are the exceptions. On the other hand, the agriculturist who remains a labourer does so only of his own fault, it can be a necessity to no one ; and therefore not only are his comforts increasing to old age, but every tree he fells, every seed he puts into the ground, is something in store for posterity. The next generation will not even casually come into the category of servants, they swell the ranks of the independent yeomanry, who ought to be the pride of the land of their fathers, as they are the strength and glory of that of their adoption.

The first habitation of the agricultural settler is generally either the log hut, or shanty, or the log house—the difference being more important than the name would imply. This is rather a question of quality than size, as the size of all will depend much on the growth of the timber of which they are made, the principle of construction being the same. The difference is to be found in the details, producing a more or less artistic and comfortable residence, the characteristic of the log hut being a lean-to, while that of the log house is a span-roof.

Ordinary log huts and log houses are formed of trees laid one upon another, just as they are felled, cut to the required lengths, and notched to fit into each other with tolerable accuracy at the corners, the interstices being filled with clay and moss. A superior log house is formed of logs squared either with the axe, or, still better, in the mill, in which the greater accuracy of the bearings gives greater strength, and leaves smaller apertures for the entrance of the cold and wet. This is probably the best form of house that can be erected with timber, the great thickness of the walls setting both heat and cold at defiance; it has, however, one disadvantage, in common with all wooden houses, the absorption of moisture, which however may be prevented in a great degree, as it often is, by an outer coating of paint, or still better of plaster.

Those log huts and houses are usually built on the ground, and but little if any care taken to secure an efficient drainage; occasionally, as is more commonly the case with frame houses, they are built over cellars, constructed for the convenience of stowing away, within easy reach, food for the winter, especially roots. To this practice much of the illness experienced in spring may very probably be attributed; for those cellars, connected with no arterial system of drainage, must, on the melting of the snow, become the receptacles of much moisture, which having no means of direct escape, evaporates through the building above, to the serious injury of the health of the inmates; this has been latterly perceived, and cellars are now not unfrequently dug at some little distance from the house.

The frame house, as its name implies, is formed of a frame-work of timber, covered over outwardly, as the case may be, either with planking or with clap-boards, or with both. The former, by itself, a very insufficient protection, being of course liable to split and warp. The clap-board, once probably as well known in this country as it is now in America, is a far more satisfactory defence, whether against the intense cold of the winter, the floods of the spring, or the fervid sun of the summer of North America. It may be described as about two feet six or three feet long, by

about three or four inches broad, one-fourth or three-eighths of an inch thick on one edge, and bevelled off to about one-eighth or less on the other; these are laid lapping one over the other, and being generally cut with saws out of the best white pine wood, are but little liable to warp or split, on account of their shortness and quality combined, and form an admirable covering, excluding moisture to an extent that would scarcely be imagined. The frame house has one advantage over even the best form of log house, viz., that the outer and inner casing being separated by some inches, a circulation of air is to a certain extent, and might be fully, kept up between them, and thus dryness promoted. This is however in all cases the effect of accident, being dependent entirely on the necessities of the construction, not on any previous intention of the architect, who is generally innocent of any sanitary motive in the choice of his mode of building; the frame house supplanting the log house for the most part so soon as the owner can afford it. In both log and frame houses the principal difficulty is the roof; this is, in the better sort, generally composed of shingles—these are thin pieces of wood, split by hand from pine or cedar logs, the latter are much the best, and are laid over a coat of planking, as slates are here. In these the melting of the snow in spring but too often discovers flaws, natural consequences of the frosts of winter.

For roofing the commoner sort of log houses and huts, a rough but ingenious mode is often adopted. Hard-wood trees, (black-ash and bass-wood are preferred for this purpose) with stems of about eighteen inches in diameter, are selected; these are cleft in two, and a trench or hollow cut with the axe throughout the whole length of both; they are then laid alternately, one below and the other above, one with the surface inward, and the other outward, the edges fitting into the grooves, and the hollows of the grooves covering the joints. This forms a long-enduring roof, but one that absorbs much moisture, as from the rough mode of construction the joints can never be brought together with any considerable accuracy: it will, however, last, and do its work in its own way, until the timber of which it is formed decays.

When not built over cellars, the floors of these buildings are laid upon sleepers, formed of logs placed usually on the earth, but sometimes on pieces of rock, brought to a rough level on the upper side with the broad axe or adze, and not unfrequently kept together by wooden pins. In the log houses, there are commonly no upper rooms, but the frame houses are modelled on the plan of the street buildings in our large towns, where every inch of land is valued in gold. By this of course there is a serious loss of heat consequent on greater exposure in winter, and *vice versâ*.

In the frame houses, the chimneys are of rough stone set in mortar, hewn stone or brick; in the log houses and huts the chimneys are generally made of rough stone, but not unfrequently of mud, or even wood, plastered over; the aperture is usually unnecessarily large, and the loss of heat very considerable. All have ovens, usually constructed of brick or stone, though now not uncommonly of iron. In respect, however, of cooking, and the apparatus necessary for it, the dwellings of the working classes in British North America will be found better provided than those of our working men at home. Whether from experience of the convenience of ships' stoves, or that the habits of the Dutch settlers have spread, compact cooking stoves are not unfrequently found in them, and time and fuel thus economized to a great degree.

Frame houses can, of course, from the great cost of sawing plank and timber by hand, only be erected in the vicinity of saw mills; but in British North America a saw mill is usually found near every little cluster of houses—indeed, the erection of one is almost invariably followed by the congregation of families around it; so that we find mill towns, with various distinctive appellations, common in the country. It is by the selection of these sites for mills, 'mill privileges,' as they are called, that in new settlements great advantages accrue to the first settlers; and instances are numerous in which the local knowledge gained by the lumberer in the woods in winter has proved a fortune to him afterwards.

The choice of aspect and situation, so important in a



sanitary point of view, is almost universally neglected ; for this it is not difficult to assign reasons—first, roads are generally run, Roman fashion, in straight lines, and for convenience' sake, whatever the soil, aspect, or situation may be, the house is built close to the road ; and thus we find the best sites for houses frequently neglected, and the worst chosen. This, however, is not altogether confined to the colonies—examples might easily be adduced nearer home. Again, the expense of time or money necessary to obtain an artificial supply of water induces most to seek localities where that is unnecessary—near springs, brooks, &c., and thus the sanitary condition of the building is often as much dependent on external as on internal influences, if not more. Among these may, with propriety, be mentioned the arrangement of offices, outbuildings, barns, stables, &c. These are often separated from the house, placed, indeed, as it were by chance, and the advantage which might be derived from mutual shelter and support entirely lost, to say nothing of the awkward appearance which is thus made, when, by proper combination, pictorial effect might easily be produced without extra expense. How much of the want of appreciation of the beautiful, so constantly felt in American life, is due to this neglect, it is, perhaps, impossible to say, but in a country where, from the scattered nature of the population, examples of architectural effect in public buildings are seldom seen, the importance of attending to it in domestic life can scarcely be overrated. In Canada, the redeeming feature in this respect is the stoup, a sort of open verandah, as useful as it is ornamental. To prevent the destruction of property by fire, which commonly in autumn devastates portions of the forest, the land in the immediate neighbourhood of houses is usually denuded of timber ; this has its advantage, in keeping them airy, and preventing danger from fire ; but at the same time exposes them to extremes of heat and cold, and gives them a bare and uncomfortable appearance, most frequently belying the substantialities within : few things are more unsightly than a log house in a clearing, simply because the owner prefers the *utile* to the *dulce*—has no time to study the elegances

of life—yet often the new comer is unnecessarily disgusted, and takes far longer than might otherwise be necessary to get naturalized in this respect. These things of course all re-act on the morals of the people, and might seriously, were they not counteracted by the absence of want, nay, the superabundance of the necessaries of life, and the ‘sparseness,’ to use an Americanism, of the population.

There is, however, in respect of his habitation, one great and very marked distinction to be drawn in favour of the working man in the colonies, viz., that the evils of his sanitary condition are under his own control, and can be removed by him at his pleasure; it is therefore only necessary to convince him that they are evils, to improve his knowledge in this respect, and their removal follows of course: nay frequently, indeed generally, they are gradually modified, if not altogether removed, as increasing wealth gives him leisure to perceive them, and leads him imperceptibly to cultivate the comforts, perhaps even the luxuries of life. Here, on the other hand, they are generally far beyond the power of those who suffer from them, and as their social condition is seldom improving very rapidly, they more commonly sink into indifference, than rise in active opposition to them.

One well-known result of sanitary inquiry in this country is, that lower sanitary conditions tend to lower the moral standard of the individual subject to them; this, no doubt, is equally true in the colonies, but it is observable perhaps more frequently in the higher than in the lower class of emigrants. The former may, unless he possess untiring energy, fall in the social scale even while he is improving his condition with respect to means of living. The latter can scarcely fail to rise in both. There are now but few parts of British North America where the labourer would not find himself placed side by side with the man of education, not, as here, without the means of profiting by the example, but with power of following him, possibly at some distance, but a distance decreasing every year, and which may, and in all probability will, disappear in the succeeding generation. On this account, as well as others, it is much to be desired that no emigration of the working classes should be

allowed to take place without a due admixture of all others, as has been but too often the case; in localities where it has happened, the evil result is very perceptible. It would also be a great advantage to the colonists of all classes, if those in this country who combine constructive knowledge with that of sanitary requirements would direct their attention to this subject, and furnish plans and elevations, with working drawings, so that buildings might be erected after them by the ordinary workmen of the country; material of all sorts is plentiful there; good workmen, though not sufficiently abundant, can usually be obtained; all are willing to assist each other. The articles of manufacture necessary for drainage or other purposes might form a profitable source of commercial intercourse between both countries. Our old timber edifices at home might supply the picturesque form—our modern improvements regulate the application.

In most of our British North American Colonies agricultural societies have been formed, and great advantages derived from them, by the introduction of good stock, and improved modes of cultivation. It is desirable that building societies should be formed also, that by them settlers might be directed to the materials and the mode of construction best suited to the locality they select for their future abode.

## SAILORS' HOMES.

BY MONTAGUE GORE.

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THE spirit of philanthropy which distinguishes the present age, reflects on it the highest credit. Every month we hear of new societies springing up; the object of which is to diminish the amount of human suffering, and to alleviate the ills which flesh is heir to. But yet this zeal in the cause of charity—praiseworthy and noble as it is—may, unless tempered with discretion, and guided by judgment, thwart the very objects it professes to advance. Under the influence of this ardour in the cause of benevolence, many schemes are formed which prove abortive; societies are founded whose existence is destined to be but ephemeral; and thus, with the best intentions on the part of the promoters of such plans, much of that precious water of charity is wasted, and diverted into unprofitable channels; which, if diffused with due care, might have refreshed the spots that are dry and parched with real affliction.

It becomes, therefore, a matter of no small moment to ascertain what are those charities which are likely to prove beneficial in their operation; and amongst them I think sailors' homes may be fairly classed.

The life of the sailor when afloat is averse to his forming provident habits and acquiring knowledge of the world. Such care is taken of him as regards food and clothing, that he is seldom under the necessity of thinking and acting for himself. He lands on his return home ignorant of the value of money; unused to exercise his own judgment and discretion; and unsuspecting of the many guiles with which his path is beset. That very generosity and open-heartedness for which he is so distinguished, lead to his ruin. To him are in a great degree unknown the humanizing influences of society, and its wholesome restraints and examples; what

wonder then that he falls an easy victim to the sharks that infest our sea ports—fiends they may well be called—whose vocation it is to prey upon the hard-earned pay of the sailor. He is decoyed by these harpies into low public houses, or other dens of infamy; where he is rendered senseless by drugged liquors, is charged exorbitant prices, and frequently pillaged of every farthing. Thus he sinks irretrievably that money, which might have contributed to his own happiness and that of his relatives.

Even sickness, which awakens sympathy in most hearts, however obdurate, acts on the wretches who entrap him as a fresh stimulus to plunder; they beset the gates of the hospitals, they watch for the coming forth of those who are discharged as convalescent—not to welcome them on their recovery—but to entice them to ruin and perdition. Oh! what villany can equal that which thus preys on the brave, the generous, the confiding, and the sick! or where can charity be more nobly and more profitably exerted, than in rescuing from these wretches their unfortunate victims! Carlyle speaks of the present as being an age of *shams*; and there may be some of the philanthropic proposals of our day which merit that title—but *here* are no *shams*—the seaman's claims on his country are *real*—the temptations and ills that he encounters on reaching his native land are *real*—and *real* is the beneficence that endeavours to rescue him from them.

The British sailor! who has greater claims on the attentions and kindness of his country? The British sailor! he is the instrument by which our commerce is diffused through the world—he is the agent by which our manufactures are conveyed to distant climes; and we are again furnished with the necessaries and luxuries of life from other countries. For whatever brought from foreign lands administers to our welfare, our happiness, and pleasure, we are in great part indebted to his toil and hardships. To him, too, if haply fresh wars should break out, we must look for protection of our hearths and our altars.

Would you judge the real worth and merit of the sailor? Go see him when the tempest howls around our own peaceful

dwellings, and we are in security, reaping enjoyment and advantage from those products of other lands which he has been the instrument of conveying to ours; go see him, not in harbour, nor in the sun-shine—but in the wintry night on distant seas, buffeting with the hurricane and weathering the storm; that he may procure for us the comforts that contribute to our happiness; the medicines from foreign climes that administer to our health; and then judge of his true character and his sterling worth. Go see him again defending our commerce; upholding the honour of our flag in every clime. Go read the records that tell of his courage, his patriotism, his dauntlessness in the hour of combat. Remember, when you talk with just national pride of the triumphs of the Nile, Trafalgar, and of our other naval victories, that they were achieved by his heroism—and then I put the question to every English reader of these pages, will he, can he, hesitate to give his assistance in providing comfortable homes for those, who thus contribute to our own enjoyment in peace, to our own security in war?

Let me now request attention to some details of the evils to which the seamen are exposed for want of respectable lodging-houses on their landing; and also to the measures that have been taken to obviate them.

Whoever has visited Wapping, Ratcliffe Highway, or the lower parts of Bristol and other sea ports; whoever has gone over the low lodging-houses into which the seamen are entrapped on their first landing, can testify to the way in which they are plundered and imposed on.

I visited a short time ago some of the houses, in Wapping and its neighbourhood, into which the sailors are decoyed. These houses are kept by crimps, who way-lay the unsuspecting sailors; they are then conducted to those places where they find music and dancing going forward; they are induced to take up their abode there, and then are plundered of every farthing they possess. In some houses I saw several foreigners; and in the days when burking was common, many of these unfortunate men were made away with.

In Bristol, when a ship arrives, the sailors are surrounded by a set of miscreants who are called 'runners,' and are taken by them to houses of the lowest description. There is no one to warn the sailor against going; there is no one to guide him to more respectable dwellings; and it has been well asked—Can they be blamed for going wrong, when there is no one to lead them right?

Instances innumerable might be cited of the horrible state of the dens to which the seamen are obliged to resort for want of more respectable residences; robberies are of frequent occurrence; and in one, I fear not a solitary case, murder was committed. It is stated in the *Cardiff Police Report* of February 5th, 1851, that an Austrian seaman, named Samercan, had his money stolen from him by a girl in one of these vile places, and on trying to recover it, the woman who kept the house brought in two bullies. They fastened the door; one of the bullies took up the poker and struck the poor fellow on the head, who fell down bleeding, and died on the following day.

Again, I find Captain Hall stating, in his speech at Bristol, that about a fortnight previous to his arrival at one of the Northern ports, a foreign sailor, who had taken refuge in one of the lower lodging-houses, was turned into the streets with only a pair of trousers and a shirt; and that he shot himself in a fit of despair.

When Her Majesty's ship *Raleigh* was paid off at Portsmouth, many of the men were so plundered that they were obliged to apply to the magistrates for redress—whilst 19 went to the London Home, taking with them 225*l.*, beside their remittance bills. It appears from the notes of the evidence taken before the Gosport magistrates that seven of the seamen were charged 102*l.* for three days' entertainment at a low public-house—one item being 6*l.* 2*s.* for two hours' ride in an omnibus; and a messmate who came to breakfast with them was compelled to pay 17*s.* 4*d.* for two eggs, some salt beef, and a cup of coffee.

Captain Hall mentions the case of some Kroomen whom he took to China; he had promised to send them again to their homes; and as he paid off his ship at Calcutta, he

sent them to England, as they could not get a passage from Calcutta to the Coast of Africa. The men arrived in London with 20*l.*, each,—they were there decoyed to one of these lodging-houses, by one of those persons who constantly lie in wait for friendless men like these. On Captain Hall's return to London they called on him; and when he asked why they had not gone to the Sailors' Home? they said that they did not know anything of it—but the landlord was very kind, and doing all that he could to make them comfortable. He said that was all very well, but they would find his kindness lasted only so long as the money lasted. In a few days after this, one of the men came back to him not as well clothed as before, and without his jacket; he asked what was the matter now? and was told, '*The landlord not so kind now, sir, money all gone.*'

When in Dublin, Captain Hall found that in some houses they gave the sailors 4*d.* worth of whisky for dinner, instead of food, which would cost 10*d.* At Belfast it is much the same; and there they are compelled, in the low lodging-houses, to pay for a wretched diet of salt herrings and potatoes, as much as would enable them to purchase substantial and nourishing food.

Again, look at Liverpool. Agents are despatched from the crimps' houses there to watch for the arrival of vessels, and to pounce upon the seamen the moment they put their foot on shore. These miscreants, on hearing of a man-of-war being paid off at any of the naval ports, despatch persons to watch the arrival of the sailors in London, and many a good man-of-war's man has been decoyed to Liverpool, and there irretrievably ruined. At Falmouth, again, it was stated to Captain Hall, by a respectable shipping agent, that he had seen 20 seamen lodging at one time in a small, unhealthy house, where there was no drainage, and the rooms of which were low and badly ventilated. In one room, 9 feet by 10, as many as seven men have often been seen in beds on the floor, and suffering, many of them, from scurvy.

The object of sailors' homes is to rescue our gallant seamen from these abominable places. Their object is to pro-



vide for seamen of all kinds, including foreigners—when paid off from their ships, when on shore on leave, discharged from hospitals, or waiting to join ships—board, lodging, and medical attendance. And in speaking of the benefits which such establishments offer to the seamen, it is but due to Captain Hall to render him the tribute which he so justly merits for the assiduity, zeal, and untiring energy which he has displayed in this great and righteous cause. These Homes owe their origin, in a great degree, to his exertions; and continue to be fostered and promoted by his watchful superintendence.

The Americans, to our reproach be it said, have got the start of us in this benevolent undertaking. In 1833, a Sailors' Home was established at Charleston in South Carolina; and since that, others have arisen in Baltimore, Providence, Philadelphia, and New York.

The first public Sailors' Home in England was instituted in Wells-street, London, 15 years ago, by the late Captain Robert James Elliott; may it long continue a noble monument of the spirit of philanthropy and beneficence which actuated that excellent man! The first private Home was established by Mr. Green, the eminent ship-builder—originally for the seamen of his own ships—but to which others are admissible by a recent regulation.

It is gratifying to find that the sailors have gladly availed themselves of the advantages offered by these institutions, and that the number of those admitted has been constantly on the increase. Those who have once experienced their comforts and benefits return again after each voyage, bringing with them in general an accession of some of their shipmates.

It appears by a recent statement, that upwards of 31,669 had been received into the Wells-street Home since its opening; of which number 12,391 were returned lodgers. Last year the inmates amounted to 4633; 25,160*l.* passed through the secretary's hand of money left in his charge; 2500*l.* of which was deposited in the savings-bank.

The building in Wells-street is capable of holding 320 men, each of whom has a separate berth. The terms of

admission are 14s. per week for full-grown men ; 12s. per week for lads ; and 10s. 6d. per week for apprentices : for this sum they are entitled to lodging and four excellent meals daily. The dietary is admirable. Adjoining is a handsome church, of which the foundation-stone was laid by Prince Albert ; and which has now been for some time completed, and opened for public service. It was with real gratification that I recently attended at the performance of divine service there ; many of the seamen were present, and the spirit of devotion which they showed was admirable. The terms and regulations of Mr. Green's establishment are nearly the same as those in Wells-street ; it is capable of holding 200 men ; and here, too, are to be found equally gratifying proofs of provident habits. Instances have occurred of men having as much as 100*l.* in the Poplar Bank.

On the 28th of July, 1849, a Sailors' Home was opened in Dublin by the present Lord-Lieutenant. Within a period of seven months from its opening, 101 seamen were lodged and boarded ; while 44 were provided with ships ; and 43 shipwrecked seamen, some of whom were foreigners, received shelter till they could be forwarded to their own homes. And I rejoice to say, that the institution has continued to prosper and flourish to the present time. At Belfast I believe that no Seamen's Home has yet been actually founded ; but a meeting has been held, officers appointed, and subscriptions have been collected for this object, which is expected to be carried speedily into effect. In a letter which I recently received from a most intelligent gentleman of that city, he says ; ' The ship-owners here are all strongly impressed with a feeling of the necessity for a Seamen's Home. Merchants complain much of the want of it, and think that its establishment would lead to a great improvement in the habits of the sailors.'

In Glasgow, Aberdeen, and Greenock, numerous and influential meetings have been held for the same benevolent object, and but one opinion was expressed of its great importance. The meeting at Glasgow was attended by the Lord Provost, the members for the city ; and the leading magistrates and merchants. Mr. Sheriff Alison, the distinguished

historian, in moving one resolution, observed, 'The seamen were placed in very peculiar circumstances—their virtues were exhibited at sea, and their vices were exhibited on shore. The community were benefited by the former, and they, the sailors, were the victims of the latter. It was therefore more incumbent upon those who were enriched by their industry, and protected by their valour, to prevent their falling into those vices to which, unhappily, so many of them were addicted: as had been so well stated, they could do nothing to improve the character of the seaman, without at the same time benefiting all classes of the community.'

On the 25th of April last, the Sailors' Home at Portsmouth was opened with much éclat; since this time it has been found necessary to build and furnish additional bed-cabins, and seamen have left the institution and entered the service again with 10*l.* or 17*l.* in their pockets. I may mention, too, one great advantage attending the Home at Portsmouth, which is the shelter it affords to the sailors who come there from other ports, previous to a ship being commissioned.

If no other good resulted from the Portsmouth Sailors' Home, it would be deserving of public sympathy and support, from the refuge which it affords to those who are discharged from Haslar Hospital, and who formerly were the ready prey of the wretches who waylaid them. In reply to a letter which I addressed on this subject to Sir Edward Parry, the excellent governor of the hospital, I had the gratification of receiving the following statement:—

'I have great pleasure in acquainting you, that the practice formerly prevalent with the crimps, and other sharks, of besetting the gates of this hospital to way-lay and beguile the invalids on their discharge is now almost at an end. This is, as I believe, principally to be attributed to our Portsmouth Sailors' Home, from which establishment a boat is generally sent every discharge-day, to give the invalids the opportunity of going there without difficulty, the regulations of the Home being posted up in various parts of the hospital. I am sure it is a comfort and a blessing to all who go there.'

At this establishment, seamen, marines and others, who form part of the crew of British vessels, are provided with board and lodging at a charge of thirteen shillings per week for men, and ten shillings for boys and apprentices, including washing. Foreign seamen are admitted on the same terms, on the application of the consul of the nation to which they belong; and on his signifying his readiness to become responsible for the expenses incurred by them.

In no port is a Sailors' Home more needed than in Bristol. I have already alluded to the artifices practised there by those who are called 'runners,' to entice men to houses of the lowest description. 'The temptations to which the sailors are exposed in this city,' says a gentleman who resides in Bristol, 'are of the worst character; low brothels and beer-houses abound in the neighbourhood of the shipping; and the lodging-houses are of the lowest description.' I am happy, however, to be able to state that a public meeting was held a short time ago for the purpose of establishing a Home, and that the fund already amounts to upwards of 900*l.* in donations, and 130*l.* in annual subscriptions. Suitable premises are now under consideration; and there is every reason to hope that in a few weeks operations will be commenced.

Besides those which I have mentioned, Sailors' Homes of a similar character have been established, or are in progress, in Cork, Dundee, Stornaway, and several other seaports; wherever they are opened they answer admirably, and prove a great blessing to the seamen.

Savings-banks it is proposed should be connected with all the Homes, which will enable the seamen to save money, and will encourage them in provident habits. They may thus spend their earnings for their own benefit, or that of their relatives and friends, instead of being plundered of them, or squandering them in low debauchery. These institutions have already been productive of great good in the sister service. It was stated by Lord Frederick Fitzclarence at a public meeting in Portsmouth, that in the regiments under his orders in the south-west district, the following sums were deposited in the regimental savings-banks:—71st regiment, 769*l.*;

52nd regiment, 600*l.*; 91st regiment, 468*l.*; 90th regiment, 817*l.*; 4th regiment, which had just returned from India, 3339*l.* There can be little doubt that the sailors will derive from these excellent establishments similar advantages.

Libraries are also provided, which afford the means of useful professional and religious instruction. Prayers are read every morning, according to the service of the Church of England; but the attendance is perfectly voluntary; and seamen of all religious denominations are admitted. If sailors of the Kirk of Scotland, or of any other sect or creed, wish to go to places of worship where the service is performed in accordance with their particular belief, the porters of the Homes are always instructed to give information where they may find them.

As one proof of the good effected by these Homes, I may mention that ships have been manned from them. It was stated by Sir J. D. Elphinstone, in Aberdeen, that this experiment had been tried by Captain Drummond when in command of the 'Castle Huntley' Indiaman, and with perfect success. Sir James then narrated the difficulty in which he had been placed at one time, by two-thirds of the crew that he expected to sail with him having been cajoled and laid hold of by a set of crimps, who took advantage of the circumstance that they knew he was bound to sail on a given day; and would not give the fellows up under 5*l.* 5*s.* a head, which they afterwards raised to ten guineas. Spurning, as he was justified to do, such disgraceful terms, he was able fortunately to supply the deficiency of hands from the Sailors' Home, and a finer crew he had never had on board; and many of them had continued to sail with him for years. In one year, no fewer than one hundred and twelve ships were manned from the Sailors' Home in Wells-street.

The British sailor may be considered, to a great extent, as the representative of the character of his countrymen throughout the globe. The commerce of England will become, let us hope, the means of evangelizing all nations.

From east to west triumphantly she rides :  
All shores are watered by her wealthy tides.  
The Gospel's found diffused from pole to pole,  
Where winds can carry, and where waves can roll.

But vain will be all efforts to diffuse Christianity, unless the purity of its doctrines is exemplified in the lives of its professors. As regards, then, the honour of England in distant climes—as regards, if I may so express myself, the character of Christianity—as regards the efficiency of those attempts which are now making to spread the gospel in foreign parts, it is of the highest importance to rescue the sailor, when on shore, from those sinks of iniquity to which he is liable to be seduced. Every seaport, too, has a direct interest in the improvement of the character of the seamen who frequent it, and whose example must exercise considerable influence on the rest of the community. To the ship-owners, as well as to their men, the Homes cannot fail of proving in the highest degree advantageous. Their ships are now often manned by men upon whom, when at foreign ports, little or no dependence can be placed. They care little about the ship in which they sail; they are heedless as to what port they shall return; but the establishment of Homes will induce those who have experienced their advantages to be desirous of returning to them. It will render the seamen better men and better citizens, and it will cause them to continue with their masters. It will be impossible, in fact, to elevate the character of the seamen without at the same time benefiting all classes of the community, and conferring a boon upon the whole country.

Nor are these establishments calculated to be less useful on foreign stations than at home. At Calcutta a Sailors' Home has been established, in consequence of which the state of the seamen is much improved. A stop, to a great extent, has been put to the system of crimps, who formerly kept punch-houses, to which they often succeeded in enticing even the best men; who were ashamed to go back to their ships, and, not unfrequently, met with untimely graves from the effects of climate, added to the excesses

of all kinds in which they indulged. At Quebec, the scenes of riot, drunkenness, and confusion exhibited at the low lodging-houses and public-houses where our seamen resort, baffle all description. The crimps and their agents encourage the men to resort to these places immediately on their arrival from sea, and frequently induce them to desert from their ships, in open violation of all engagements which they may have entered into for a voyage. Great mischief is the result, and too frequently commanders are compelled to proceed to sea with a short complement of men, giving, at the same time, extravagant wages to those they have, a month of which must often be paid to the men in advance, for the purpose of releasing them and their clothes out of the possession of the crimps. The mode of life they have led whilst on shore renders them totally unfit for duty when embarked; and when the ship is under weigh, and their services are most required, they are frequently stowed away in a state of insensibility. In no place is a Sailors' Home more required.

It is most desirable that, whilst every comfort is afforded to the inmates of Sailors' Homes, all needless expense should be avoided; and to ensure their success, they must be made self-supporting. The one at Liverpool is on a magnificent scale, both externally and internally; but Jack cannot feel at home in so fine a building. It is impossible to over-estimate the spirit of benevolence which actuated the founders of this princely edifice; but, probably, two or three houses at different parts of the river, upon a small and less expensive scale, would have rendered more service.

I have thus attempted to show the evils and temptations to which our seamen are exposed, and also the remedy for the mischief, by the erection of Sailors' Homes—I have endeavoured, as much as possible, to confine myself strictly to facts; and I am sure that every one who appreciates the character, and takes an interest in the fortunes, of the British sailor—and what Englishman does not do so?—will be glad to further, in whatever way he can, these excellent establishments. I am glad to find, that in the bill recently introduced by Mr. Labouchere for the improvement of the

mercantile marine, express reference is made to this subject. At all our ports, legal powers and advantages will be granted to the Homes. And in a letter received by Captain Hall from the Board of Trade, in the month of August last, Mr. Labouchere expresses his sense of the 'importance of the objects which the Homes are intended to answer, and his satisfaction at the success which has attended Captain Hall's efforts;' and states 'that he is willing to encourage them by any means which he can with propriety employ for the purpose.'

It is gratifying to see that attention is now awakened to the condition of the seamen, and such means taken to improve it. A great change for the better has taken place in their situation, especially as regards the men-of-war sailors. No means are neglected to promote the comfort and welfare of these latter, from the time they enter the navy till they are discharged as pensioners. They are made to feel the respectability of their position, and instead of receiving their pay in a lump on their return home, they are allowed a large proportion whilst on foreign stations, and very many of them remit half of it to their wives, parents, and other relations. But there still remains a wide and ample field for the exertions of the benevolent; and the success which has attended past endeavours to ameliorate their lot should be an additional stimulus to future measures of the same kind. It can no longer be said that Jack is irreclaimable, and that attempts to reform his character or improve his circumstances, however well intentioned, are useless.

The facts which I have mentioned in these pages are, I hope, a satisfactory answer to this. And I will further say, that the sailors are sensible of and grateful for this attention to their comforts: they are thus rendered doubly attached to their profession; and whenever, of late years, opportunity has been given for the display of their courage, they have shown that, whilst their condition is better, their heroism and gallantry are not inferior to those of their predecessors. They retain all the nobler qualities of those who have gone before them, and will maintain Britannia's supremacy on the ocean waves, come danger from what quarter it may.



Science may change the mode of future warfare, but the real strength of fleets—the hearts of the crews—will remain unchanged. The meteor flag of England will still float triumphant; and if we are engaged in fresh battles, they will prove but the preludes to fresh victories.

I have endeavoured in these pages to awaken the sympathy of the public in behalf of the seamen; and I would say to the philanthropic and benevolent, here is a field for the exercise of your beneficence—here is ample scope for the display of your kindly feelings. Exalt the character, improve the condition of the seaman, and, with his improvement, you raise the reputation of your country—philanthropy and patriotism here meet together. And though my remarks have been principally directed to the erection of Homes, there are other institutions which I wish to see thriving and flourishing by their side. The life of the seaman is one of risk and peril, and his children may be at any moment deprived of their natural friend and guardian. Is it too much to ask the country to become such in his place? Is it too much—nay, is it not rather the duty of the country to stand as the father to those unfortunate orphans, whose parents have died in its service?

An admirable institution exists at Portsmouth, called the Portsmouth Seamen and Marines' Orphan Schools, the object of which is to provide the orphan children of seamen and marines of her Majesty's service and Indian navy with a useful and religious education, according to the principles of the church of England, and to support and clothe them. The report for the present year states, that the education of the children is making rapid progress; at the beginning of the present year, the schools were removed from their former inconvenient site to their present handsome, commodious, and healthy one, and thus the directors have been enabled to take an important step towards carrying out a plan which they have long steadily kept in view, viz., the industrial education of some of the elder girls as domestic servants. The boys, when they have attained the proper age, are fitted out for her Majesty's service. One of the boys who left the institution pledged himself to return, by

instalments, the money expended in his education and for his outfit. Several boys have been fitted out at the expense of the charity, giving ample promise that the virtues of morality, cleanliness, order, cheerfulness, perseverance, and courage, would be largely displayed in them.

These orphans are left a legacy to the country by those who have died in its service. What more touching than the fate of orphans! deserted, desolate, alone amid the multitude that surrounds them; destitute of all support; and whose affections have but one spot left on which to dwell—the *graves* of their parents! Oh! it is indeed kindness to solace these unfortunate infants; and to shed some balm of comfort on their forlorn and afflicted hearts! it is indeed kindness to kindle some sparks of hope in these withered bosoms; and to let them feel that their fellow-beings can sympathize with them. You, who read these pages, have you ever felt the pangs of affliction? If so, can you remember the comfort you experienced when some friendly voice whispered sympathy to you? Can you haply remember how the outpourings of your grief to your friends mitigated in some degree its anguish? By the remembrance of your own sufferings—by the recollection of the solace you experienced from the sympathy of others, let me call on you to prove yourselves the friends of these friendless children—the parents of these orphans. ‘The name pleads the cause,’ to quote the eloquent words of the Reverend Mr. Melville, in a sermon he delivered in behalf of the London Merchant Seamen’s Orphan Asylum—‘the name pleads the cause: ‘The Merchant Seamen’s Orphan Asylum.’ The orphans of seamen! shame upon the Briton who cares not for the sailor; our country sits a Queen upon the waves, and it is mainly owing to our seamen that, under God, she owes her greatness and her majesty. . . . I cannot but feel how many wives of seamen there must be who turn pale when they hear the fury of the storms, and remember how the fathers of their children are far away on the surges of the deep; how often must come tidings of shipwreck, which tell the wife that she is a widow; that the one whom she best loved has gone down, with the

waves for his winding-sheet, and that her children must be henceforward destitute ! Oh ! not so ; English benevolence—your benevolence—will forbid this ; and the distracted mother shall be comforted, and shall know that you have helped to provide a home for her orphans.'

We point with laudable pride to our naval trophies ; we profess our esteem and admiration for our seamen. Never can that esteem be better shown than by procuring for them comfortable homes during their own lives, and education for the children whom they leave behind.

# ON THE ADULTERATION OF FOOD, AND ITS REMEDIES.

BY VISCOUNT GODERICH.

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IT is now many years since Mr. Accum first exposed the almost incredible extent to which the practice of adulterating the most necessary articles of food was carried in this country; but it would seem that, so far from his revelations having of themselves checked these disgraceful frauds, or induced the consumers at large to take effectual steps to put an end to them, they have gone on increasing, till they have now become almost universal as regards such low-priced commodities as of necessity form the staple food of working men; and the recent investigations of the *Lancet* have shown an amount of adulteration, for which even those best acquainted with the 'tricks of the trade' were hardly prepared. These valuable articles open by the following statement, which every succeeding page bears out only too well: 'that the various articles of consumption differ greatly in quality, and are subject to numerous adulterations, must be evident to all, from the slightest consideration and examination of the subject; and if any general proof were required to establish the truth of this position, *it would be found in the low and unremunerative prices at which very many commodities, to be genuine, are now commonly sold.*' It is among the cheap dealers, who supply the food of the greater proportion of the people, that these frauds chiefly prevail; and as the more dishonest a man is, the cheaper he is thus enabled to sell, and consequently the more numerous are the customers he attracts, we see day by day those who, in the great war of competition, have hitherto been able

at least to be honest, if not prosperous, forced to choose between giving in to these practices, or being driven altogether from the market; so that, although the price may lower, the food which it is possible to obtain becomes less and less pure, till at last a state of things is reached such as that described in the *Lancet*, the nature and extent of which the following extracts will be sufficient to show:—

To begin with the most important article of man's food, bread; it was found that *every one* of the forty-nine specimens examined contained alum in greater or less quantities. (Vol. i. p. 423—Vol. ii. pp. 398, 399.) The *Lancet* has, in a manner deserving the highest praise, appended, in this and other cases, the names of the different shops where the samples were purchased; and though the subsequent examination of specimens of *flour* forwarded by the accused bakers would seem to throw a part of the blame on the millers, yet, on the whole, these investigations show that the largest amount of fraud is committed in the bakehouse, except as far as selling damaged or diseased flour is concerned.

The results of the examination of thirty-four different kinds of coffee, the favourite beverage of the working-man, show 'that with three exceptions, *the whole were adulterated*, that chicory was present in *thirty-one instances*, roasted corn in *twelve*, beans and potato-flour each in one case; that in fifteen instances the adulteration consisted of chicory *and* either roasted corn, beans, or potatoes; that 'delicious drinking coffee' consisted of *a large quantity of chicory and much roasted corn.*' (Vol. i. pp. 23, 24.) Again, of 'twenty-nine packages, bottles, and canisters of coffee, all except one were adulterated, five of them containing roasted wheat, farina, and substances bearing a close resemblance to *mangel-wurzel and acorn.*' (Vol. i. p. 505.) In order to facilitate the use of chicory for these purposes, a Mr. W. Duckworth, of Liverpool, whose name deserves to be well known, has taken out a *patent* for (among other things) '*the forming, moulding, and compressing chicory into pieces of the shape of berries.*' The worthy man! One should have thought these were impurities enough to be

mixed with one article—but no ; there is worse to come. Chicory, it has been seen, is the chief ingredient in the adulteration of coffee, and, except that it is *not* coffee and has a tendency to produce diarrhœa and to exert injurious effects on the nervous system (*Lancet*, vol. i. p. 529), it is comparatively harmless ; but this chicory itself is also adulterated to a great extent, for from the first report on the subject in the *Lancet* (vol. i. p. 306) it appears that fourteen samples out of thirty-four which were examined contained impure matter, such as sand, roasted corn, scorched beans, ground acorns, &c. ; and from the second report (vol. i. p. 528), we find that out of twenty-three samples, eleven were adulterated in the same manner, but with the agreeable variety of *sawdust, mangel-wurzel, roasted corn, and Venetian red.*

The case of tea is, if anything, worse than that of coffee, the substances mixed with it being still more injurious to the health. It would be too long to describe the adulteration practised, before the tea reaches this country, by the Chinese, and which chiefly consists in mixing with good tea a preparation which they most appropriately call ‘*Lie Tea,*’ and which, though at the first glance looking very like real tea, consists almost entirely of lumps of dirt, the sweeping of the shop-floors, &c., with a very few leaves ; this part of the matter is bad enough, but the relation of a few of the proceedings of ‘respectable’ tea-dealers in England will be sufficient to show that we are much more advanced in the art of cheating than the benighted inhabitants of the Celestial Empire ; for the *Lancet* tells us (vol. ii. p. 92), ‘the chief adulterations to which black tea is subject consist in the use of leaves other than those of tea, in the re-preparation of exhausted tea-leaves, and in the employment of substances, either for the purpose of imparting colour and stringency to the infusion, or to glaze and face the surface of the dried leaves, so that they present an improved appearance to the eye.’ The leaves used in this country are ‘beech, elm, horse-chesnut, plane, bastard plane, fancy oak, willow, poplar, hawthorn, and sloe. The leaves are dried, broken into small pieces, and usually

mixed with a paste made of gum and catechu; afterwards they are ground and reduced to powder, which, when coloured with rose-pink, is mixed either with the dust of genuine tea, or with inferior descriptions of black tea.' The other 'substances' above alluded to have been found to consist of Prussian blue, indigo, turmeric-powder, China-clay, Chinese yellow, soap, stone, &c. These are among the least deleterious and disgusting ingredients, for the list goes on to enumerate *black lead*, *vegetable red*, *carbonate of lime or chalk*, and certain 'little lumps,' which were recognised, if it be possible to believe it, as *the sweepings of the trays in which silk-worms had been kept*.

Green tea is treated much in the same manner, except that the colouring matters are perhaps more freely used, especially French chalk, which is found to 'face' tea remarkably well: but that of which, on the whole, the greatest use appears to be made is *catechu*, a hard brown substance, with yellow spots here and there, consisting chiefly of tannin, and said to give a peculiarly fresh appearance to old tea-leaves; of which, and of its evil effects on the health, a full account is given in the *Lancet*, (vol. ii. p. 94.)\*

It would be tedious to allude to the various kinds of filth, including musty cocoa-nut, animal fat, tallow, and ochre, which are mixed with cocoa, chocolate, &c.; or the potato-flour, sago, and starch, which convert arrow-root from one of the best kinds of food for the sick into a positively unwholesome compound. Enough has been said to show the magnitude of the evil; and of its injurious effects on both buyer and seller, no one can doubt. To the former it is the cause of great varieties of disease, from which thousands who suffer have no means of escape, as they *cannot* obtain any other food than that which is destroying them. To the latter, who thinks to profit by it, it in truth brings no less evil, though in a different shape—not alone in the ever-lowering morality produced by thus

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\* The Nos. i. and ii. of the volumes here quoted refer to the first and second volumes of the *Lancet* for the present year (1851).

daily cheating all who come to buy of him, but also in the consequent utter want of confidence which the consumer now has in all retail dealers. The word of a British merchant was once said to be worth another man's bond; but now the 'morals of trade' have become a bye-word of reproach.

Such being the food which is offered to human beings to eat here in England—and in I fear to say how many cases being the only food they *can* get—it is surely high time for all men to consider how such a state of things may best and quickest be made to cease; and although the amount of attention hitherto paid to the subject has been very inadequate to its importance, various remedies have from time to time been proposed. Many persons, looking to the amount of every real theft which is daily committed by means of these adulterations, have thought that the government might do something to protect the consumer in such a case, more especially considering the connexion of both tea and coffee with the revenue of the country. But the only step which the Treasury has of late years taken in this matter is one of a very different nature, and which it is not easy to call 'in the right direction;' namely, the issuing of the 'Treasury order' of the 31st August, 1840, by which the adulteration of coffee with chicory was *legalized*. What good could be expected to arise from telling coffee-dealers that there was 'no objection to their mixing chicory with coffee, or to their having the same so mixed on their premises,' to cheat the public with, it is difficult to conceive; and so, in the last session of Parliament, Mr. T. Baring introduced a bill into the House of Commons to attempt to remedy this evil, and to obtain the repeal of this singular 'order.' In the course of the debate, the Chancellor of the Exchequer fully admitted the extent to which adulteration was carried on—not in coffee alone, but in 'sugar, tea, arrow-root, and many other articles of consumption among the people,' and he allowed that 'it might be the duty of the government to protect the health of the public against injury from the consumption of deleterious matters; but he did not hold it to be the duty of the



government to interfere in ordinary cases between the public and the seller. In such cases, he held that the public must take care of themselves, and that the doctrine of *caveat emptor* must apply; and so declined to do anything; and the House of Commons agreeing to this view, rejected the bill. It might be said that such a state of things is none the better, but considerably the worse, for being *ordinary*; and that how a working man who cannot purchase an unadulterated article—none except *the highest priced* now being so—is to *take care of himself*, is not very clear; but such discussion is, for the present at least, useless; for it is evident that nothing, whether possible or not, is to be looked for from legislation, and that for the time the practical impunity of robbery (for such in plain terms these frauds are), is to be preferred to any interference with the sacred principle of *laissez faire*.

It is most probable, however, that any law would have been but an insufficient remedy for evils of such long standing and almost universal extent; and, therefore, on all grounds, we should hail with the greatest alacrity any practical remedy, which can be established and carried out without government assistance, and which seems likely to be able to relieve the working classes from the pressure of this great ill; and as they are the chief, though by no means the sole sufferers, it is not surprising that they should have been the first to apply, if not to discover, such a system. It is now many years ago, since the shrewd practical working men of Yorkshire, Lancashire, and the Lowlands of Scotland set up the first *co-operative stores* which existed in this country, or, I believe, in Europe; and their success already justifies by practice the belief long entertained in theory, that they have therein found an effectual means of securing to themselves pure and wholesome food, at prices easily within their reach. Co-operative store is the generic name, so to speak, of a large number of establishments with very various specific designations; but which all agree in being founded and conducted on the following principles. As soon as a sufficient sum has been collected, either by small subscriptions from working men themselves, which

has been the case in most instances, or by loan from some richer person, a shop for the sale of tea, coffee, groceries, &c. (and occasionally many other kinds of goods), is opened, which is conducted by a manager, or a committee elected by the subscribers; and who, being able to buy the articles supplied by the store at wholesale prices, sell them again to the members and the public at reasonable retail ones. The profits thus realized are, in most cases, and ought invariably to be, *divided among the purchasers in proportion to their purchases*, the subscribers receiving, as such, a reasonable interest on their advances. The effect of these arrangements in banishing adulteration, must be clear to every one on a very little consideration. The whole management is in the hands of the members, to whom the manager is responsible; and who, the more they buy at the store, the larger share of the profits do they obtain; and who are of course sure, as they are able, to see that only good and unadulterated articles *are sold to them by themselves*. The manager has no interest apart from the other members, still less diametrically contrary to theirs, as is the case between the seller and the buyer at present; and a system of friendly co-operation and mutual confidence is thus established, instead of the 'every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost' principle, the latter clause of which every day is showing so fearfully to be the inevitable result of the former.\*

The history of many of these establishments, of which there are upwards of 170 now existing, is extremely interesting, and gives a practical answer, a thing so much valued by Englishmen, to the objections urged against them. One of the most remarkable is that existing at Rochdale, under the somewhat singular title of 'The Equitable Pioneers.' The following sketch of their rise and present condition is from the pen of one intimately acquainted with all the co-operative stores in the country, and who has done much to

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\* I have purposely omitted to notice the many other advantages of the principle of co-operation, as I have here to speak of it only as a remedy for the adulteration of food.

advocate and assist their establishment. 'They commenced their operations in December, 1844. A strike of the handloom flannel-weavers had just taken place in that town (Rochdale), and the loss and inconvenience suffered by those engaged in it determined them upon trying some more practical method of dealing with the difficulties of their situation. After some deliberation, they decided upon clubbing their means, and, as far as they could, purchasing wholesale such articles, as they were daily in the habit of consuming. Thirty only joined at first in this experiment, and the money raised by them only amounted to 36*l*. With this sum they took the bottom room of an old warehouse for three years, at an annual rent of 10*l*. Repairs and necessary fixtures absorbed nearly the whole of their capital, leaving them a mere trifle in hand; with this they purchased some oatmeal, flour, and a small supply of other kinds of provisions. The capital was collected in small payments of threepence per week, and when collected and invested, it was decided that, as the subscribers had themselves found the capital, the profits of right belonged to them, not in 'proportion to the capital advanced, *but in proportion to the amount of business done by each individually with the store.* The advantages resulting from this mode of doing business soon became understood by the people in the neighbourhood, and, as a consequence, subscribers came in so fast that the premises became too small for their accommodation. Recently they have enlarged them, and in connexion with their store they have several looms at work for the manufacture of flannel, as well as a large mill, so that they may supply themselves with good and cheap flour. Pecuniarily, this experiment has answered well; *through its instrumentality the subscribers receive all articles entirely free from adulteration, no chicory in their coffee, no potato-flour in their sugar, no sloe-leaves in their tea; they receive on their money, adding interest on capital to profit on business, at least 28 per cent.* Many of the subscribers, who were for years held in bondage by small dealers, to whom they were in debt, have liberated them-

selves, and receive from the store profit enough to meet the payment of instalments demanded by the County Court for the liquidation of their old liabilities. Morally, the advantages are incalculable. *It has rendered honest-dealing a necessity, because all being interested in the business, all have the right of inspection and control, for the preservation of good faith in their dealings.* It finds them valuable employment for their spare time, because in the inspection of manufacturing and commercial affairs they acquire those useful habits of management and prudence, in which the working people are at present so sadly deficient; and by meeting together frequently on matters of business, they become cognizant of each other's wants, and naturally desirous to assist in rendering aid, where it may be needed.' 'All this is very fine,' some one will no doubt say, 'but what are the *results* of this seven years' management of manufacturing and commercial affairs' by a set of operatives?' Why they can answer that question pretty well, I think; for having, as above stated, begun with only 30 members and 36 pounds, they have now 670 members, and do an annual business of about 18,000*l.*, expending last *quarter* 4290*l.* 0*s.* 9*d.* for goods at the parent store alone. They have invested 650*l.* in the corn mill, where they grind 246½ sacks a-week, and have set up four or five branch stores, which are all flourishing, and remain in union with these gallant pioneers, who truly well deserve their name. It would be far too long to speak particularly of the stores at Liverpool, Bacup, Bingley, Edinburgh, Halifax, Oldham, Sheffield, Birmingham, &c. &c.; but a few more examples must be given to show the really surprising success which has attended these attempts. At Forfar are several stores, some of long standing, one of which numbers 400 members, and has a yearly business of 7000*l.* At Bury is a more recent establishment already numbering 125 members, and doing a business of between 30*l.* and 40*l.* a-week. At Bradford is a flour mill, conducted on these principles, with 1264 members, which grinds 125 sacks a-week; at Birstall near Leeds, there is one with 657 members, and a business of from 12,000*l.* to 15,000*l.* a-year. And in Leeds itself is

a still more prosperous example of the same kind, which with 3400 members has an annual business of 29,000*l*.

These flour mill societies would seem to have met with less difficulties than co-operative stores in general, and at the same time, unfortunately, to be less useful, and in many cases conducted on less sound principles.

That the fundamental idea of all these experiments must be a sound one is proved by their succeeding so well under the immense difficulties they have had to struggle against, and the entire absence of all assistance; for most of them have been set up by working men themselves, who have clubbed together their small savings, as in the case of the Rochdale Pioneers. Near Manchester, among the eight or ten such establishments in that neighbourhood, is a remarkable example of this kind in the Garden-lane store, Salford, which started with a capital of *seven shillings and sixpence*, gradually gained enough to purchase its first loom, which was christened 'Elevator,' and toasted in butter-milk, and is now, though not quite clear of difficulties, in a fair way to succeed.

In London, there have long existed, I believe, a few unimportant stores; but the recent establishment of the *Central Co-operative Agency*, intended not merely to act with its branches in Marylebone and Manchester, as ordinary stores, but, as its name implies, to centralize the whole movement throughout the country, can by no means be passed over in silence. In the end of 1850, the London Central Co-operative Store, as it was then called, was opened, at first merely to sell, in the ordinary manner, groceries and other articles on the principles above described. It had the great advantage over the country stores of starting with a considerable capital, lent to it by its founder, and it has prospered exceedingly well ever since. In the course of the present year, it was thought advisable to attempt to bring about a closer union among the various co-operative bodies scattered throughout England and Scotland, as had been strongly recommended at a conference held at Manchester in April last; and, in consequence, the central store took the title of the Central Co-operative Agency, and undertook to exe-

cute orders for, and otherwise assist, any stores which might choose to avail themselves of the offer; and it is already in communication with the Rochdale Pioneers, and between twenty and thirty others. The want of such an arrangement was much felt; for small stores, in any but the largest towns, were still very much at the mercy of the wholesale dealers, who, in country places, often adulterate their goods as much as any one, even while their members were delivered from the frauds of the retailer. Now, however, by means of the Central Agency in Charlotte-street, Fitzroy-square, which has the choice of the London market, they can obtain the best goods cheaper than before, and without any doubt as to their purity.

Though I have hitherto spoken almost entirely of the advantages which the working classes may derive from co-operative stores, these benefits are not confined to any particular class of persons. The same principles carried out by any set of people will, of course, lead to the same result of guarding them from the disgraceful frauds now so universally practised, that the names of many of the largest tea-dealers and grocers in London are on the *Lancet's* black list; and the richer man, if he would everywhere join with his poorer neighbours in opening such a store, would not only be most effectually aiding them, but would also be sure of getting *pure* food at much lower prices than at present, and of finding, at the same time, a good investment for the capital he might subscribe for that purpose. The Central Agency has published a form of rules 'to enable any number of families, of all classes, in any district of London, or any part of the country, to form themselves into 'friendly societies,' for enjoying the benefit of co-operative stores,' which make it very easy to set one up anywhere. Enrolment under the 'Friendly Societies Act' has, of course, great advantages, in giving much increased legal securities to the members; but some of its provisions have, I believe, been found very inappropriate for the purposes of co-operative establishments.

Such then is the evil, and such the nature of the remedy which alone, it would seem, is capable of effectually remov-

ing it. It is, therefore, manifestly the duty, and also the wisdom, of every one to examine these matters for himself; and if he find, as I believe he surely will, that the statements here made are true, then let him at once, on behalf of his suffering brothers, and on his own also, lay his hand to the good work of thus rooting out an evil so great and so indisputable.

# THE POLICY OF PREVENTION

BY DR. GUY,

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WHEN Cook, Howard, and Jenner were busy, each after his own fashion, plotting the destruction of Scurvy, Jail fever, and Small-pox, they seem to have been so taken up with the work they had in hand that they had no leisure for speculation. It did not occur to either of them that the labour of love in which he was engaged was but part of a large measure of reform, destined some day to have a name and a *status* among great social and political movements. It was enough for Cook to remodel the internal economy of his ships, for Howard to correct the abuses of prisons, for Jenner to disarm the small-pox of its terrors. It was reserved for our own times to point the moral of their acts, to apply their methods on a larger scale, to convert them into popular arguments and practical precedents, and to discover the life-giving principle of which those isolated reforms, and even the more comprehensive measures of our own times, are but special cases and illustrations. To us the achievements of Cook, Howard, and Jenner, are very precious as arguments. If Cook, under all disadvantages, could contrive to preserve the health of seamen pent up on board ship, what might not we hope to effect with our soldiers and citizens; if Howard could succeed in vindicating the enjoyment of health as a right even of the guilty inmates of a prison, with what confidence shall we not claim it as an indefeasible privilege of the honest and industrious; and if Jenner found a means of preventing small-pox in so unexpected a quarter, shall we not be justified in looking forward to similar discoveries in



places hitherto unexplored? With what irresistible arguments and potent precedents have not the three sanitary philanthropists of the eighteenth, furnished their successors of the nineteenth, century! With what a treasury of analogies has not Howard himself endowed us—analogies admitting of the most important practical applications! Twins are not more alike than the prisons of Howard's time and the low lodging-houses of our own day. Honest working men by the thousand, in town and country, in every part of England, are compelled to live in as complete destitution of all the appliances of comfort and decency, and of all the physical aids to morality and religion, as the most degraded tenants of the worst gaols of the last century. They breathe the same foul atmosphere, they are pressed into the same narrow space, they are compelled to the same unseemly companionship, they languish under the same loathsome diseases, they are doomed to the same premature decay. Howard's gaol fever was but the prototype and progenitor of the typhus fever, which, one year with another, brings from fifteen to twenty thousand of the most valuable part of our population to untimely graves, and stretches at least ten times as many, for weeks together, in muttering delirium, on beds of sickness. Now, as then, the same causes produce the same effects. The owner of house-property at the present day leases his tenements to middle-men, whose only care is to secure a maximum of rent with a minimum of outlay. The owner of prison-property in Howard's time did the same. To make the analogy complete, some of the worst tenements now, like some of the worst prisons then, are the property of ecclesiastical corporations and men of rank. In one important point alone does the analogy fail us. The window-duty, which robbed the prisons of the last century of light and air, and has done so much to make dungeons of our own houses, has happily been abolished, after a struggle which did little credit to our financial reputation, and still less to our humanity. In all other respects, the analogy between the low lodging-house, or the squalid dwellings of the poor in town and country, and the prisons of which Howard has left us such graphic sketches, is complete.

The sanitary history of the eighteenth century has yet to be written, and the instruction it is calculated to afford us is still very far from being exhausted. One great lesson, however, written in characters so large and legible that he that runs may read, forces itself especially on our attention. It is the immense superiority of PREVENTION to PALLIATION. The efficacy of simple measures of prevention is the great truth, the broad principle, which stamps the works of Cook, Howard, and Jenner, as belonging to the same class. It is this common attribute that links all their labours together. On their great achievements we may securely lay the foundation of a sound POLICY OF PREVENTION.

The inauguration of the policy of prevention, as a state-policy, may be said to have taken place in the year 1774, when the legislature, with very creditable promptitude, and chiefly on the strength of Howard's evidence, passed two acts; the one to afford relief against the extortion previously practised by gaolers, in the shape of fees, the other for preserving the health of prisoners, and preventing the gaol-distemper. It is not intended to affirm that the legislature were more conscious than Howard himself was that these acts of justice and humanity towards the prisoner were but constituent parts of a new and grand policy, in all respects worthy of a great nation; a policy of prevention contrasting most favourably, both in theory and in practice, with the opposite policy of palliation of which, for more than two centuries, our Poor Laws had afforded so prominent an example.

The sanitary reforms of our own time have been brought about in the same unconsciousness of the broad principle which they involved. The Public Health Act, with its machinery for facilitating local improvements, presented itself to the minds even of its most intelligent advocates merely as an isolated measure, recommended by considerations of economy, humanity, and justice, and not without support from moral and religious considerations. So also with the admirable private undertakings set on foot by the friends of sanitary reform. Model lodging

houses, and baths and wash-houses, were established as special remedies for special evils, not as constituent parts of a great plan of prevention. And even when the legislature, convinced by the success attending the efforts of charitable societies, proceeded to empower the parochial authorities to appropriate a portion of the rates, hitherto devoted exclusively to purposes of palliation, to the erection of baths and wash-houses, and model dwellings for the poor, it manifested the same unconsciousness of the fast approaching revolution of which these healing measures are the harbingers.

And here let us reflect for a moment, with as little pride and as much thankfulness as may be, on the striking contrasts which France and England present in the public acts of the last few years. France makes a revolution, and at once proclaims her trio of principles—Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity—without having previously done a single deed to prove that these principles, so excellent in themselves, had been at work in her everyday life. England, on the contrary, in her own silent and unobtrusive manner, executes works replete with the spirit of Christian liberty, brotherhood, and true equality, and which need only the tongue or pen of a skilful interpreter to stand forth in all the grandeur of a large and comprehensive idea. A Policy of Prevention, firmly based on successful experiment, is seen gradually supplanting the old and ruinous Policy of Palliation; the life-giving spirit of charity, which is the prevention of evil, superseding by degrees the too often destructive letter of charity, which is its mere palliation.

The point to which all these observations tend is the systematic advocacy of national measures of prevention in opposition to, and in lieu of, the miserable measure of palliation embodied in the Poor Law. But it would be too much to expect that a law which enjoys the prestige of three centuries should be repealed at one stroke of the pen. Though the laws of settlement and removal, even if they could have the sting partially taken out of them by the substitution of the union for the parish, would be

much more powerful for evil than the whole remaining system of the Poor Laws for good; though the Poor Law lately extended to Scotland meets with little commendation at the hands of those who are best entitled to be heard; though there is every reason to believe that in Ireland it has destroyed many more lives than it has saved; though the same statement might be very plausibly supported in reference to England, both in past times and at the present moment; and though the utter failure of the *Ateliers Nationaux* in France supplies a fresh argument against a Poor Law in England; a man must be very sanguine who can bring himself to hope for anything better than a gradual appropriation of the poor rates to wiser purposes. The permission to invest a portion of these rates in profitable undertakings, yielding a fair interest on the outlay, and a still larger profit in the prevention of sickness chargeable to the parish, is a great step in advance. The power of licensing and inspecting common lodging-houses is a still greater stride. The next measure of the same class, it is not difficult to foresee, will consist in empowering the parochial authorities, on proof being given that any house, or court, or street, is a focus of disease, burdensome to the rate-payers, in the form of fever cases and pauper funerals, to purchase the property on a compulsory valuation, raze it to the ground, and erect on its site wholesome model dwellings, to be let at a reasonable rate, rigidly exacted, week by week, as a simple matter of business, without the intrusion of any considerations of charity, falsely so called.

If at the same time that the parochial authorities were empowered to destroy property which can be proved to be burdensome to the rate-payers, it were made a standing order of both Houses of Parliament, in reference to all improvements, and every undertaking involving the destruction of the houses of the poorer class, that as many new and wholesome tenements shall be constructed in a convenient situation as the improvement or undertaking has been the means of destroying, the work of building real

houses for the poor would go on with the rapidity which its vast importance demands.

But we must not deceive ourselves into the belief that we have done all required of us when we have provided decent and wholesome dwellings for the poorer classes of the population; for as long as our streets are thronged with people clothed in rags and covered with filth, so long will our houses be desecrated by habits in keeping with their garments. To clear the streets of these disgraceful objects another work of Prevention must be taken in hand.

We must attack, by every allowable weapon, those professors of the art of palliation, in its lowest and meanest form, whose malpractices have attracted this horde of beggars into our streets. It is well known that there are perverse people among us who will persist in confounding naked, barefooted, and ragged people, following an infamous trade in our streets and highways, with the poor whom Christians are commanded to relieve; and who have such an inveterate habit of dropping pence about on the very slightest provocation, that they create a demand, and offer a temptation, which no idle person can well resist. These mischievous people have been told over and over again that the poverty we are bidden to alleviate, and the mendicancy which it is our duty to discourage, are two distinct things. They know that the law forbids begging; and yet they deliberately tempt these idle people to break the law.

If they persevere in their evil courses, the state will have no alternative but to follow the example of Bavaria, and revive an obsolete statute of our own, which visits the acts they perversely characterize as almsgiving with the punishment they deserve. Such laws are apt to be inoperative, but, if passed after due discussion, they serve as a valuable expression of public opinion. They, of course, interfere with what people are wont to call the liberty of the subject; but to infringe a liberty which has degenerated into so mischievous a licence, will scarcely outrage

the sense of propriety of any reasonable person. So long, too, as a Poor Law continues to exist, the pretext often set up in justification of dropping money about in the streets, that it may possibly prevent some really destitute and deserving person from starving, is evidently an idle and foolish one; unless, indeed, it be alleged that the Poor Law is so cruelly administered, and the workhouse so repulsive a place, that it is the duty of a humane man to do much certain evil that he may compass the occasional doubtful good of keeping a deserving person out of it. Those who are of this opinion, and are wont to make use of this argument, should lose no time in protesting against a law which, under the fair pretence of charity, contrives to become so hateful and repulsive. So long, then, as we have a Poor Law, the patron of street beggars remains inexcusable. If ever that law shall be repealed, the question of indiscriminate almsgiving will have to be discussed on its own merits, and the chances of encountering a deserving person begging in the streets, will have to be considered and calculated.

These observations are intended to apply to all mendicants without exception, including the aged, blind, halt, and maimed, on the one hand, and the hawkers of flowers, lucifer matches, pencils, penknives, &c., with street sweepers, on the other. The streets of the metropolis and our large towns are not the proper places for the aged, blind, halt, and maimed. For them the workhouse, if unable to find any employment or to obtain the help of friends, is the proper place, and for such persons at least the poor laws ought not to be made repulsive. The street-sweepers, too, being really mendicants, wearing the rags and adopting the habits of beggars, ought to be superseded by honest working men, appointed by the parish to do that necessary work.

Until the streets are thus cleared of the beggars who infest them, and bring disgrace upon our national character, no great advance in true Christian civilization is possible. The ragged schools may teach these outcasts, and even find honest occupation for a small fraction of them; but so long as the same aggregate amount of money is squandered in

the streets, and the same quantity of provisions given away with equal carelessness, so long, in a word, as the demand for beggars continues at its present level, the place vacated by one ragged object will be filled up by another, and the evil will merely be palliated in a few cases, not cut up by the roots, as it must be. As a single practical illustration often makes more impression than any amount of reasoning, however sound, let us take a case in point, as illustrating the difference between prevention and palliation.

Every one has heard of the parish of St. Giles, and most persons know something of Church-lane, the solitary remnant of the once notorious Rookery. The parish comprises many wide thoroughfares and long crossings, both in a very dirty state. As the parochial authorities have taken no steps to have the principal crossings swept clean, the work is done, on the voluntary system, chiefly by ragged Irish boys and girls, who never fail to take up their stations on the Sundays, that they may give church-goers an opportunity of bribing them to absent themselves from religious worship. Church-lane, St. Giles's, being one of the most convenient and suitable residences for such ragged and dirty people, and for their friends and associates, the pure beggars and thieves, they naturally take up their abode there, become very troublesome to the police, and in due time fall ill of fever, when, having previously helped to infect their neighbours, they are carried off to the workhouse to be tended, and, if they die, buried at the cost of the rate-payers. So that we have the following succession of mischiefs—dirty crossings, which, not being cleansed by honest working men, fairly paid to do good work, are converted into stations for beggars, who throng Church-lane to excess, catch fever and other fatal and costly maladies, infect their neighbours, and in this way punish the rate-payers for the first neglect of the authorities to keep the crossings clean. Nor is this all. The public must be called upon to subscribe to ragged schools, to teach these miserable victims of parochial negligence and of the temptation of indiscriminate almsgiving. Here we have the wretched system of palliation at work in several distinct ways.

Now let us contemplate the effects of the opposite policy of prevention. The crossings swept by honest working men, and the indiscriminate almsgiver repentant, these poor begging boys and girls would be put inevitably to honest labour, for which a demand would be created by the simple spending of the money now so foolishly given away, or expended out of the rates in the relief of filth-created fever and disease. And if the parochial authorities were further empowered, on evidence of the costliness of Church-lane, in its present squalid state, being given, to raze it to the ground, and build decent and wholesome dwellings on the site, the work of prevention would be, for this particular district of the metropolis, complete.

The policy of prevention then (to repeat what has been already stated) is fairly inaugurated. It is being gradually substituted, both by individuals and by the state, for the wretched policy of palliation, which has disgraced and impoverished us for the last three centuries. Palliation of evils, the consequence of incapacity, misconduct, and accident, there must still be; but this is the appropriate work and high privilege of individuals acting discreetly by and for themselves, or voluntarily enrolled in charitable institutions. With palliation, the state ought to have nothing to do. It is a policy full of danger to ourselves, and of bad and mischievous example to neighbouring nations. Economically unsound, as simply shifting money from individual hands, where it is being used in preventing poverty, to official hands, where much of it must be wasted in encouraging idleness and carelessness, and the rest in the poorest work of palliation; practically cruel, as the popular opinion of a Poor Law proves it to be; morally mischievous, as making no distinction between virtue and vice, but discouraging industry, temperance, frugality, and foresight, by snatching the idle, the intemperate, and the improvident from the punishment which ought to overtake them; and politically dangerous, as pledging the state to the impossible undertaking of providing food or work for the people—our policy of palliation, embodied in a poor law, has misled our neighbours, and compromised ourselves. Let England but openly embrace



the opposite POLICY OF PREVENTION, and bravely profess that it is not the duty of a state to provide either food or work for the people, for the simple reason that it has no funds of its own to deal with, and that it must always rob at least as many persons of food or labour as it supplies with either, and the stronghold of Communist and Socialist doctrines would be shaken to the ground. Whether we openly and boldly profess this change of policy or not, of this there can be no doubt, that the true state POLICY OF PREVENTION has been silently inaugurated, and is unconsciously gaining ground among us. Its unqualified adoption by the State would happily still leave quite scope enough for the play of true Christian charity, and the nurture of that first of Christian graces and virtues ; for though extreme destitution would become very rare, and many impoverishing maladies would wholly disappear from among us, there would be some poverty to alleviate, much grief with which to sympathize, ignorance to enlighten, sin to reprove, virtue to encourage, criminals to reform, and all sorts of good works to foster and promote.

# A PLEA FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE MILLION.

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PREACHER AND ASSISTANT OF ST. JAMES'S, WESTMINSTER.

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IN the year 1843, the writer of this paper was doing duty in a populous parish in the city; he was called to see a poor Irish woman in the last stage of consumption. The woman had been left a widow with one daughter: she had married again; her second husband a shoemaker, by whom she had a second family. During the progress of her illness the daughter watched her night and day; nothing could exceed the attention the mother received, for the girl was of the most affectionate disposition. The mother died; nearly a week elapsed, and though the survivors ate, drank, and slept in the same room, the poor woman was unburied. The husband was urged to hasten the funeral; the injury pointed out which was done to the rest of the family; the survivors reminded that the pang of parting was rather increased than assuaged by delay. The husband agreed to all that was urged; but the poor daughter begged for a respite. She said her heart would break, if for a little time longer she was not allowed to look upon a face, which in life had ever smiled kindly on her. 'You do not know,' she said, 'the comfort it gives me; never mind my health, I am not afraid of that.' And another week elapsed before the corpse was removed.

Suppose such a girl as this in the hands of an earnest, kind-hearted teacher, would she not have been an apt pupil? The key to such a disposition was kindness: she would have learnt readily what her mistress wished to teach her, lest she should seem ungrateful; and the very wish to oblige one

she liked would have seconded her efforts : and would not religion have gained a hold upon such a heart as hers? Did this poor girl after all, then, turn out well? She died a prostitute, in the parish infirmary. Her mother was scarce buried, when her step-father began to grumble about supporting one who was not his own child, and many quarrels took place, in which she was repeatedly beaten, before a situation could be procured for her. Her home was uncomfortable, and she was well nigh driven to the streets. At length she got a place and went to service, but in the house of a small shopkeeper, as maid of all work. She was unkindly treated—returned home again—took to the streets ; in a short time was turned out of doors—became a prostitute; soon the victim of disease, went into a hospital, which she left when restored to health; resumed, it is to be feared, her old occupation ; and still delicate from recent illness, scantily clad, and in a severe winter, caught a cold which settled on her lungs, and soon hurried her off in a rapid consumption.

To what shall we set down this poor girl's sufferings and early death? To the want of that moral control it is the first object of education to give. Her mother died when she was eighteen; had she been properly trained, she would have been qualified for the situation of domestic servant, and thus have given greater satisfaction to her employers; and the prospect before her if she returned home, would have made her bear even the harshness of her employer, until she could have got a better place. The society of a workhouse is loathsome, its discipline repulsive; but a girl with any sense of religion would have preferred them to prostitution, even though a workhouse had been the only alternative. At this length of time, it is impossible to say whether this girl had been brought up in the National school of the parish where she lived: if she had, the system under which she was trained was ineffective; if she had not, our present course of education does not comprehend all the children within the boundaries of the respective parishes where they live. In the particular parish I allude to there were several schools; one very large, under the auspices of

the British and Foreign School Society, a National school, one for young children, and several kept by private teachers.

Within the last year the following case occurred. A gentleman wanted a page—applied to the master of a school, supported partly by endowment, partly by contribution. From a number of boys, averaging about thirteen years of age, he took one, who was recommended as a fair specimen of the system pursued there. The boy went into service, and after three or four years wished to enter a solicitor's office, for which he thought himself better calculated. He was sent to a solicitor who was in the habit of visiting his master. During office hours he was expected to attend to business; he boarded and slept at his father's house. For a time things went on well, till at length he began to keep late hours, and when his father remonstrated with him, he left his home and took lodgings. It was then found out that he spent his evenings at Casinos; his wages could not afford this. Soon afterwards, he was sent to pay some bills; he disappeared with the money. When discovered, about a week after this, he had not a shilling left. His story was, he had become acquainted with a prostitute, at her instigation he appropriated the money, and, as might have been expected, when it was spent, she turned him out into the streets. The boy subsequently had a severe illness, which for a time seemed to bring him to his senses. But soon after his recovery, his old habits returned. He took his brother's watch away, while the latter slept; pawned it, went out for a day's pleasure, met with an accident which ended in his death.

National schools had done very little for this boy. He had been taken away too soon, perhaps. Yet his education does not seem to have imparted to him any tastes, or cultivated any pursuits, which would have counteracted the craving for low debauchery; and as a large class of young men have much time on their hands, especially in the evening, we may ask, is there any good system of adult teaching, which might enable them to turn their leisure to good account, combining the instruction they *need* with the amusement they *will* have?

It may be said, these two instances are not sufficient to condemn the present system, there will ever be a certain average of black sheep. Yet these two unfortunates are types of a large class, and since thieves and prostitutes are often drawn from these sources, it is worth while to consider whether a remedy is impossible.—Education had done little for either the boy or girl. But no party contends that the education of the working classes is what it ought to be. Ask the National Society, they tell you they are cramped for want of funds—the British and Foreign Schools the same; whilst both admit they are far from supplying the wants of the times. Each fancies that if its own plan had the force of law, then its merits would be fairly tested; but that it fails for want of room for development. But this is impossible; the popular form of our government will not allow that one system should be stereotyped to the exclusion of the rest, even though it had a majority in its favour. Can no plan be hit upon then, which might displace those now in vogue, combining points in which all agree, which, if it did not preserve all that was peculiar to each party, would enforce nothing that was at variance with the feelings of any.

Is there, in the first place, no example of this sort of concession at the present time? Are not men of different sects combined together for the promotion of religious objects? What is the Bible Society but a mixture of Churchmen, Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, Wesleyans, and others? Do they not all circulate what is called the authorized version of the Scriptures, because it is the common rule of their faith and practice? Surely then we may assume it as granted, that with a plan of secular education common to all you might join the reading of the Scriptures. You might go as far as the British and Foreign School Society, or as the Board for National Education in Ireland. But many will say this is not enough—the Bible needs an interpreter; if it be taught in lessons, the master, even under the most rigid system of surveillance, will add his own comments to the text, and thus in fact inculcate the articles of faith professed by the religious body to which he belongs.

The experience of the two educational societies we have mentioned does not seem to justify such a suspicion, they are carefully watched by the many enemies by whom they are surrounded, and there is quite sufficient *amour propre* in the members to make them raise their voice against concessions to a different religious sect from their own. We may go further than this. The Religious Tract Society is the organ of a large number of clergymen and dissenting ministers. The members distribute *tracts*, or *doctrinal* essays among the sick and aged of their flocks. These little books set forth not only a certain number of doctrines held in common by the great mass of professing Christians, but those very doctrines which they consider most important, and with which no others can be put in comparison—because they are the *peculiar* truths of Christianity—doctrines not concerning the externals of religion, church-government, forms of worship, ceremonies, &c., but rather the great articles of faith—the great rules of practise which all the sects we have named combine to revere. These tracts are written by different members, not of one but all these religious corporations. This does not hinder their circulation, and there cannot be anything which is deemed heretical by those who belong to the society, for this would be the death-warrant of the work in question.

The religious wants of the times have led to greater concessions even than these. The City Mission is not content to circulate tracts which have received the common imprimatur of rival parties, it has covered the metropolis with a net-work of missions, its agents visit the sick and the poorer classes generally with the professed object of teaching them the word of God; they are bound to keep back nothing which they deem essential to the spiritual welfare of those on whom they call, no fear of offending rival sects, no dread of alarming a particular class of subscribers may interfere. These missionaries are chosen from the members of several different religious bodies. Of the two secretaries who manage, in conjunction with a committee, the funds of the mission, one is a clergyman—the other an independent minister. Surely if any individual from among these

various denominations could aver that the missionaries were unsound, taught error, or kept back truth, he would at once proclaim it. You cannot imagine an ordeal more severe than such teachers undergo.

It seems possible then to set on foot a plan which would combine secular with such an amount of religious education as would be a base for the instructions of the several teachers of the sects to which children belong—or what is better, that enough would be taught to aid the efforts of the pupils in the search after truth. We are not left even to this. The Bishop of London was never deemed unmindful of the claims of the Church. What does he say on the question in the debate on Education, in July, 1845? He quotes a passage from the report of a Committee of the House of Commons on Education, in 1818, stating, that in many schools where the national system is adopted, the Church Catechism is only taught, and attendance at the established place of worship is only required of those whose parents belong to the establishment. In the same debate he says, 'I know it is practicable to educate the children of churchmen and dissenters together, having been president of a very large national school (he is supposed to refer to Bishopsgate), to which the children of every denomination, Jews not excluded, were admitted. I know that it requires very judicious management to avoid giving offence to dissenters; yet we have enforced our rules judiciously, and the dissenters are content to leave their children in our hands to receive instruction in what are held by the church to be the fundamental principles of Christianity.'

Who shall say after this that no general scheme is practicable?

It will be urged that the church is the established teacher of the nation: she has the sanction of the government; all the strength that law can give her; the advantages which a settled and acknowledged position confers; the support, with but very few exceptions, of the nobility and gentry; and, perhaps it may be asserted without contradiction, numbers a majority of the nation among her professed disciples. Surely, then, she must be heard first;

and the head and front of her protest against the system we advocate is that it explodes the Church Catechism. This manual teaches the doctrines which she supports, and therefore believes to be derived from Scripture. To give this up, and to substitute another for it, were to make surrender of the truth. In and through this she hopes to fulfil her great mission as a teacher of Christianity—the great moral reformer of the age. Has she succeeded in this object? Let it be granted that rival teachers have disputed the palm and divided the field with her; yet she has had the control of by far the greater number of those children who received any education at all. They are fair exponents of her principles. Will it be contended that the working classes—even those who in large numbers were brought up at her schools—are Christians? Many of them, how many have openly discarded the name? Let us not shut our eyes to the fact. The great majority of working men may be divided into two classes—the indifferent and the infidels; they who think not belonging to the former, they who think to the latter class. Grant, if you will, that the infidels bear a small proportion to the others, yet they are on the increase. Should this fearful assertion be doubted, the test is easy. In most churches of the metropolis a distinct part of the building is set apart for the poorer members, under the name of free seats. How many of the younger and middle-aged men occupy these seats? They are filled with women and old men, for the most part. Extend what we have said even to the dissenting chapels (though this form no part of our argument), and who are the chief pew-renters? The various grades of shopkeepers, not working men. Who attends religious lecture? Young men employed in shops, not working men. When a clergyman forms classes for the discussion of literary and scientific subjects, working men avoid them, lest they should be suspected of leaning towards the church—though the Socialist place of meeting in John-street, Fitzroy-square, is filled when lectures of this kind are announced. Has early training in the Catechism preserved the pupils of our national schools from the poison of Socialism and Infi-



delity? Party spirit is one of the strongest feelings of our nature: has even this *esprit du corps* been evoked in maturer life by the studies and the formularies of their childhood? They have not become attached members of the church; they have not even been kept from going over to her worst enemy. Do not let us for a moment dissemble—in spite of catechisms and early training, in spite of confirmations, in spite of our classes and lectures, the large mass of the metropolitan working population is alienated from our folds. Our loss has not been, indeed, dissenters' gain; but they have been added to that daily increasing class who practically live without God in the world.

Are we to hesitate, then, when it is proposed to combine our forces in a common plan of education, because the Catechism is a sort of sacred shield, beneath whose protection all are safe? Has it been an ægis to us? Are we not contending for that which embarrasses, robs us of our allies, divides forces whose concentrated power would prevail against the common foe? Can there be no Christianity where the Church Catechism is not? Is this the tie that binds it to life?

Supposing it satisfactorily proved that the present amount of education met the wants of half the people of this country, and that the rest were left without any secular or religious training, a fair appeal might be made to the ruling powers to amend the evil. You would ground this appeal upon the injurious effects of ignorance generally; that an ignorant member of a social community was not on a par with his better trained brother; at every turn he was pinched and hampered; had neither the same motives to virtue nor the checks upon vice—the same sources of amusement—was as one fettered in the presence of men whose limbs were free. Our condition at present is worse than this. Many of those who cannot, or will not, be educated at the schools established by different religious bodies remain in their primitive ignorance; but many are taken into schools from which religion is studiously excluded, and where the teachers are known infidels. A case in point happened within a parish with which the

writer is connected. A boy was sent home on a particular occasion by his master for some fault committed. The parents of the boy (the father being a professed infidel) conceived that the master was prejudiced against their son. Acting under this impression they placed him at the school alluded to, whence, his progress being slow and his conduct at home refractory, he was soon removed.

But it is our main design to show that a general system of religious education can be enforced, combined with secular training. This may be further shown by examining the course pursued in countries where there are as many different religious sects as our own. For this purpose, we will refer to the able work of Mr. Joseph Kay Shuttleworth, entitled *Education of the Poor in England and Europe*. He tells us in the early part of his work—‘M. Gauthey, a protestant clergyman, and director of the normal schools at Lausanne; M. Vehrli, director of the normal school near Constance; the professor of the normal school in Argovie; M. Scheider, minister of public instruction in the canton of Berne; and M. Fillengrey, of Hofwyl; all assured me that they did not find the least inconvenience resulting from the instruction of different sects in the same schools. Those who differ in faith from the master of the school are allowed to absent themselves from the doctrinal lessons given in the school, and are required to attend one of their own clergy, for the purpose of receiving from him doctrinal instruction. Even in Fribourg, a canton formed by the Catholic priests, who are themselves under the influence of the Jesuits, Protestants may be found mingled with the Catholics in the school, and are allowed to absent themselves during the hours of religious lessons; and in Argovie, a canton which has so lately distinguished itself by opposition to the Jesuits of Lucerne, I found that several of the professors in the normal school were Catholics, attending the cantonal schools.’

Again, in speaking of France, page 43:—‘It was long debated in France how the difficulties arising from religious differences should be overcome; whether they should attempt to establish separate schools for the different sects

of Christianity; whether they should open the schools to all these various sects, and banish from them all religious instruction; or whether they should open the schools to the different Christian persuasions, and commit the management to a master chosen from the most numerous sect in the department or commune of which it was the most normal and elementary school. They felt that if they adopted the first course, they would leave the education of many children, where there was not a sufficient number of some one sect in a commune to enable government to establish a separate school for it, totally unprovided for. They felt, also, that if they adopted the second alternative, they would leave the most deeply important part of education either wholly neglected, or at least most indifferently provided for; and that to deny the master the liberty of giving practical religious education in the school, was to deprive him of the most powerful means of improving the character of his children. They, therefore, adopted the third alternative, and resolved to place each of the normal schools of the different departments, and each of the primary schools of the different communes, under the management of a teacher selected from the most numerous Christian sect in the department or commune in which the school was situated. They further arranged that the parents who differed in religion from the master or director of the school should have the power of requiring their children to absent themselves during the periods of religious instruction; but they ordained that it should be necessary for such parents to provide elsewhere for the religious education of their own children.

SEE STATUTE OF APRIL 25, 1834.

Dans toutes les divisions, l'instruction morale et religieuse prendra le premier rang. Des prières commenceront et termineront toutes les classes. Des versets de l'Écriture Sainte seront appris tous les jours. Tous les Samedis l'évangile du Dimanche suivant sera recité. Les Dimanches et fêtes conservées, les élèves seront conduits aux offices divins; les livres de lecture courante, les exemples de l'Écriture, les dis-

cours et les exhortations de l'instituteur tendront constamment à faire pénétrer dans l'âme des élèves les sentiments et les principes qui sont la sauvegarde des bonnes mœurs, et qui sont propres à inspirer la crainte et l'amour de Dieu.' To the same effect, M. Guizot's letter to schoolmasters. At page 89, M. Cousin is cited, and from him are extracted the following rules regulating the instruction given under the Prussian system:—'That whenever it is possible there shall be in a school intended for several Christian sects, masters of the different sects, who shall direct the religious education of the children of their respective sects; but that when the locality in which a school for more than one Christian sect is opened, is too poor to support more than one master, the parents who differ from the schoolmaster in religious belief shall be obliged to provide for the religious education of the children out of school, or shall permit them to attend the religious lessons given by the schoolmasters. 2ndly. That the labours of the day shall always be commenced and ended by a short prayer and a few religious observations, and the master is warned not to let this degenerate into a mere matter of routine. The masters are charged also to conduct their scholars to the religious services in the churches on the Sundays and feast-days, and to mingle religious chants with the school exercises.' With reference to the schools of Austria, we have the following:—'The Roman Catholic, as the national religion, is that taught in the schools of Austria, *but dissenters from this form of faith are neither excluded nor separated; nor are they required to engage in the religious services, or peculiar ecclesiastical learning in these schools.* In the Roman-Catholic schools, the Jews, as well as the protestants and other dissenters, arrive one hour after, and leave one hour before, the other pupils; these two hours being occupied with religious services and instruction, such as was attempted in this country some years ago.' Page 128, we have this account of the educational system in Holland:—'As respects religion, the population of Holland is divided in about equal proportions into Catholics, Lutheran, and Protestants of the reformed Calvinistic Church, and the minis-

ters of each are supported by the state. The schools contain, without distinction, the children of every sect of Christians. The religious and moral instruction afforded to the children is taken from the pages of holy writ, and the whole course of education is mingled with a frequent reference to the great general evidences of revelation. Biblical history is taught, not as a dry narration of facts, but as a storehouse of truths, calculated to influence the affections, to correct and elevate the manners, and to inspire sentiments of devotion and virtue. The great principles and truths of Christianity, in which all are agreed, are likewise carefully inculcated; but those points which are the subjects of difference and religious controversy, form no part of the instructions of the schools. This department of religious teaching is confided to the ministers of each persuasion, who discharge this portion of their duties out of school; but within the schools, the common ground of instruction is faithfully preserved, and they are consequently altogether free from the spirit of jealousy or proselytism.'

In these different countries, presenting as many different forms of religious belief as our own, one general system then is observed. The great fundamental truths of Christianity, common to all of them, are taught in common—whilst in those instances where the wish is expressed, the children are instructed by their respective ministers in the peculiar tenets of their own sect. In the well-known pamphlet of Dr. Hook, the establishment of such a plan of general education in England was advocated with the writer's usual ability. With two exceptions, such a course might be introduced which would leave but little to be completed by the respective ministers of the different sects. The Roman-Catholic and Unitarian congregations would repudiate much which is taught by the great body of Christians—or, to state it more accurately, the one would add to, the other take away from, the doctrines generally thought necessary to salvation; but the children of Roman-Catholic and Unitarian parents might be excused from attending the religious lessons of the school, when such a wish was expressed. Many details would still be left for

further consideration, though several of the difficulties to be encountered must have occurred in those countries where a general system of education prevails. It may be asked, Is such a measure to be supported by local rates, and the attendance of children to be compulsory? Is want of education to be visited with civil disabilities? But these are questions foreign to our object, which has been to show only how far a general system of education is possible.

It were too easy to prove how vital is the question, Shall the people of England be educated or not? Pauperism is in this country a great evil, and poor's-rates are an oppressive burden. Crime claims a fearful per-centage of our population; among the working classes, drunkenness is the rule—temperance the exception. Mechanics denounce the civil institutions, deride the religious establishment of the country; these may need reform, that to be remodelled, yet ignorance blinds them to the benefits of our civil polity, and exaggerates the defects of our national church. Demagogues lecture in every town of sufficient amount to make lectures profitable. Infidel tracts are issued by thousands; ribald publications, tales of murders, romances whose staple are incest or adultery, occupy the stalls of small booksellers. Publications which exercise the reasoning powers, and inform the mind, are unread. In such shops science is a drug—history a task—Shakespeare uncut; whilst Reynolds numbers a thousand worshippers. Our resources are large, our common sense undoubted.

Is the Church Catechism the only cure?

# WORDS FOR THE WORKING CLASSES.

BY ROBERT BAKER.

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THE wisest and the best of us are apt to be exceedingly depressed about trifles. We often brood over them, and magnify and multiply them, till our minds are so filled with perplexity and distress, that we can hardly lift up our strength against them; forgetting always, that through life, with the vast amount of competitors for her favour, the chance of misfortune is far greater than the chance of good fortune, and that in all probability, if we take no notice of what we fear, we shall hear no more about it.

He was a wise and good physician, who on being applied to by a nervous patient for advice in an imaginary ailment, recommend him to 'go home and forget it.' For why should we be discouraged or dismayed, when anything does happen to disconcert us or to disarrange our plans? We never should, indeed, if we had a lively conviction of 'the special Providence' which there is 'in the fall of a sparrow,' or if we understood that action and reaction are always equal; and that as it is with the diseases of the body, so it is with the events of life, that the moment after an accident has happened to it, Nature sets about to repair it, if she can.

This is not theory only. When an eye is lost, Nature renders the other eye stronger, that it may better bear the double duty which it will henceforward have to perform: and when disease attacks a limb, if she cannot heal it, she draws a line of demarcation between the good and the bad, between the sound and the unsound parts, and so gets rid of them.

Now it is trite to say, that the closer we copy Nature, the more sure we are of being nearest the mark. Because her

laws are unerring, her progress is healthy, pure, and free. The principle which guides the wandering stars home again, which builds the honeycomb without loss of room in the space which it has to occupy, which gives different colours by the same sap, from the same earth, in the same plant, which arranges the uses of carbon and oxygen so that animal and vegetable life act and react upon each other, are the finger-posts of reason, everywhere put up to direct our footsteps; and if we lose our way, it is only because we wont be at the trouble to look up, and are too self-dependent to be properly directed.

Life is full of difficulty, no doubt. There is no necessity to demonstrate a fact so palpable. What then? Depend upon it, 'the more labour, the more honour'—and we have but to say, 'we will,' and we shall. A few months back, a labouring man accosted me by asking me if I remembered him? I answered, 'No.' 'I thought you didn't,' said he, 'but my name is ——; I live here in this village hard by. Seven years since you came to lecture to us on the subject of human capabilities, and you told us, that if we would accomplish any thing, we might. I took you at your word, and went home, determined to make a seraphine, and was months before I succeeded.' 'Did you succeed at last?' said I. 'Yes,' he replied; 'and my son taught himself music, and is now the organist at your parish-church.' I could not help being struck with the difficulties which this man must have had to encounter, without proper tools, with the smallest means, and with having to attend to his daily labour also—and I thought again of the Italian proverb, which says—

The last thing which is lost is hope.

Now, I have no doubt, but that many persons are quite unable to comprehend this argument of 'will' and 'shall,' and dispute altogether such a theory of possibility. Those are the persons who give in, almost before they have commenced the contest. But surely, if imaginary evils grow in the mind, we may equally calculate on imaginary remedies growing also, and in the same ratio. He who can fancy



evil, ought also to be able to fancy good; whilst he who really suffers, ought to remember, that while we can breathe, we shall never sink; and that the only danger of really drowning, arises from the fear that we shall.

Persons who are in the habit of taking a desponding view of the affairs of life, and who see everything, as through a glass darkly, would do well to remember the following couplet as a charm, to be repeated at least three times a day, morning, noon, and night; since it has been rarely known to fail of producing the most soothing and salutary effects:

If you *can* mend it, mend it;  
If you can't mend it, end it—

because it is clear, that if the difficulty or sorrow or trial under which we labour, is one that can be mended, we ought to set about it at once; and if it cannot, the sooner we put an end to it the better.

Why should we lie down in despair and die?—No. Let us rather be up and doing. It will be time enough to fold our arms, when we feel that we have no longer the power to resist the current which will carry us over the falls. And even if we have to begin the world again, if that will mend it, let us begin the world again, and thank God that the world is left us to begin in. If, however, on the other hand, we have no means of repairing the evil, let us not despair, since no despairing can serve our purpose. Why should we lament over the pitcher which is broken at the fountain, as if there were no more clay with which to make another pitcher. The wasted time of the sluggard diminishes his chance of successful competition by every moment which he loses, just as the unused muscles soften and enervate by inaction; whilst he who begins again and again after every defeat, diminishes by every trial, one by one, the difficulties which beset him in the outset, till they are all overcome.

Trials are only human contrasts, by which the harmonies of life are discovered; and we only comprehend the true extent of our own happiness by comparison. It swims, indeed, upon an uncertain tide. Now, it is neap, now, spring-tide; now, sunshine is on the water, and now,

shadow. And yet as salt, which is the preserving element of all animated nature, and sugar, which is that of vegetable, may be extracted from each, so may we, if we will, gather happiness and consolation from our greatest trials. Whatever may be our sorrow, we know at least that death will put an end to it; and what need we care for the world, if we are prepared for *that*? All sorrows and all trials come to wean us from the world. They show us how the mortality of the body dwindles away before the immortality of the soul, and that the duty of the latter is to bring the former into subjection.

That many men are more perplexed by petty mischances than by great ones, is equally true; and if, indeed, neglect or vexation assail us, if amid all our efforts to do right, to serve our friends, our employers, or our country, our best intentions are maligned or perverted, and we are ready to sink under it—why should we say ‘die!’ Rather let us live on, try on, persevere. A colony of ants having discovered some sugar in a glazed sugar-basin, which lay just under a projecting leaf, unthinkingly threw themselves over the leaf into the midst of it. Having satiated themselves to their heart’s content, they prepared to carry off each his respective burthen, when they found out that it was not so easy to walk over the sinking sugar as they had expected; and still less so to mount the sides of the slippery basin. Again and again they tried, but without success; till, at last, on a sort of consultation, they concluded that the way to make a road smooth was to tread it well; that the world was not made of one excellency, but of many; and that though in their passage out of the sugar-basin they were sure to tread upon one another, where there were so many, yet by helping one another, also, they would eventually all escape. And so they acted. They trod and retrod over the same path till the sugar was consolidated; they then mounted over one another till only a few remained, and one by one, the lowest climbed over the rest, till they all escaped.

And it is so with human ants. By each fulfilling his own duty, the great duty of life is accomplished. We are all treading fast upon the heels of one another. What then!

—our ancestors have left us their wisdom for our government, and we must leave our improvements upon theirs to our posterity. Never fear, that right will be right eventually. Integrity will overcome the most sinister insinuations. No double mind ever lastingly prevailed against integrity of purpose.

Are we the victims of calumny, what then?—‘Sparrows always pick at the best cherries.’ Let us be thankful that we are worth the sparrows’ notice. Sparrows are good judges, for a picked cherry is always the sweetest. When ‘thieves break through and steal,’ it is for property, not trash; and the great enemy of mankind would not take so much trouble to steal souls, if they were not jewels beyond price. Lastly, the little story of the singing bird comes not inaptly to close this article.

Three or four boys under a hedge, were one day descanting upon the qualities of various singing birds.

The first said, he thought the skylark was the finest singing bird, for he went up and up into the sky, flapping his little wings, and singing as he went, filling the air with his sweet music; and then down he came again, as happy as possible, to his little mate upon the green sod.

Nay; but said the second, I like the robin; for he sings in the winter months, when all other birds are mute.

The third, who was thought to be a little short-witted, gave it as his opinion, that neither the lark nor the robin had it, but the cock sparrow; for though he had not so many notes, those he had were most encouraging, for they always said ‘Cheer up! cheer up! cheer up!’ all the day long, from early dawn to dark.

Whoever is, then, in sorrow, or difficulty, or trial, let him ‘cheer up,’ and—

If he can mend it, mend it;

If he can’t mend it, end it.

# POPULAR INVESTMENTS :

WITH A TALE OR TWO, SOME STATISTICS, AND TWO CONCLUDING  
PORTRAITS.

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**I** FOR one, don't blame the government, for not having earlier made provident societies, clubs, or other forms of investment for the operative classes the subject of legislation, as they were not numerous enough at any earlier period to attract legislative attention, nor to require, on public grounds, its interference.

If it be replied, the government, in its parental character, would have done wisely to have suggested and originated such societies for its citizens, we reply, the citizens themselves create the government, and hence, in England, it is the usual and more natural order, for movements rather to originate with the people, than with the legislature. The people are jealous of any seeming dictation, and better submit to the *check* of authority, than to its spur.

The duty of belonging to some one investment society of the kind has presented itself to the writer's mind in the following light:—

For the last twelve years he has been considerably engaged in the administration of Poor Law relief. He cannot disguise from his reluctant notice the painful fact, of how large and overwhelming a per-centage of applicants for relief had been, for long periods of their lives, in the habit of earning wages the surplus of which, remaining over and above the cost of their maintenance, would, if properly in-

vested, have secured them an honourable independent subsistence for the unproductive residue of their lives. Their frugal contemporaries, whom they scandalized by their example, they further tax with the burden of their subsistence. They commit a constructive injustice upon their more provident fellow-citizens; and when society inveighs against the gratuitous pauper, not because he is poor, but because he viciously made himself so—society is not unjust in such a retaliation upon its trespassers.

The gracious law of England, that makes the poor-rate compulsory, would deal with scarcely more than even-handed justice to compel some kind of club-payment too, for why should I be compelled to contribute to the support of my neighbour, and he not be compelled to contribute in some shape to support himself? If it were an infringement of the liberty of the subject to compel my neighbour to support a club, it is an equal infringement on my subject-liberty to compel me to support my neighbour.

I only ask for equal legislation; make poor-rates and club-rates equally voluntary, or equally compulsory, and both would be the better for either alternative.

Scripture enjoins, as at once a social and a personal duty, providence and frugality. In the writer's observation, too, provident men are as generally distinguished by their *hospitality*, as by their frugality. They have imbibed this two-fold spirit from that Divine magnanimity that first fed the hungry thousands in the wilderness, and after they had eaten and were filled, '*gathered up the fragments that remained, that nothing be lost.*' It is this habit of 'gathering up the fragments,' that constitutes all the difference between the lot that lives from hand to mouth, and that which has 'bread enough to eat and to spare.' That which Scripture thus enjoins, Nature and Providence alike illustrate. Each passing season prepares for its successor. The subsoil organizations of Spring, elaborate the growth and increase of Summer, and the ripenings of Autumn create the supply of the insolvent Winter. Youth is a gymnastic school of exercise for manhood, and the hardy vigour and occupations of manhood realize the store that shall support the infirmi-

ties of age. The body corruptible is the seedling of the body incorruptible; it must be 'sown a natural body,' or ere it can be 'raised a spiritual body;' and thus life itself is a didactic series of preparations for eternity. Human experience, in all its shifts and changes, corroborates the necessity of adherence to these views. That the policy of providing against the contingencies of life is generally admitted and acted upon among the better informed classes, is obvious from the fact, that in A.D. 1837, nearly *six hundred millions worth* of their property was insured against fire alone. These people know what they are about, and they do not advise you to do something they do not do themselves. Their candid invitation to the working classes is to 'do as they do'—to set aside a part to secure the whole—to sacrifice a trifling per centage of present means, to insure the permanent enjoyment of an ulterior provision. Why do not the working classes do it? In the first place, give them their due, many more of them do insure in clubs, or savings-banks than we are aware. They have not half the credit due to them on this score. Mr. Greig states, that the total number of societies to which the working classes contribute, is not less than 33,232, and the number of contributors is not less than 3,032,000. They have a capital of no less than 11,360,000*l.*, and an annual income derived from their contributions and interest, of no less than 4,980,000*l.* There are no operatives in Europe equal to those of Great Britain, in the wealth, intelligence, and influence of their order. Vast as the sum is, which the operatives have thus invested in various societies, an immense amount of it, unhappily, will be wrecked in the profuse expenditure, incorrect tables, suicidal rules, and other calamitous mismanagement of the systems they have adopted. A competent friend of the writer, who has gone largely into the statistics of benefit societies writes, 'I have myself investigated 110 societies, nearly all in the Midland counties, and this is the summary. Only one could be considered sound and efficient, and which did not contain within itself the seeds of its own dissolution. One hundred and three held their meetings at public-houses. The innkeepers had

a direct interest in ninety-seven; twenty-two were enrolled, and though with the one exception all unsound, they had obtained the sanction of government; seventy-three shared their funds annually, and had to start afresh every year. There were ninety clubs in one single parish, of which eighty-six held their meetings at public-houses. Their rules required them to spend 98*l.* a-year, exclusive of the annual feast (and, of course, exclusive of voluntary drinking); forty societies have failed in one parish alone within the last thirty years, and upwards of 2,500*l.* have been squandered and lost through mismanagement; five met at one public-house; the landlord was treasurer to four; he was found dead in his bed; and, consequently, the four non-enrolled societies lost the whole of their funds.'

What a deplorable state of things it is, that the hard earnings of the working man, to the amount of millions, should be invested in institutions of which the vast majority are pernicious to the morals, and a cruel swindling of the property of the people. Yet how difficult it is to convince men of the injury they do themselves by such associations. It is always easier to persuade working men to get money than to save it. They work hard enough, and, for the most part, live hard enough; but too many of them drink hard, and that is the retributive cause of every other hardship. There must be labour, for it is the law of God, and it is the law of social necessity and progress; but there need be no hard working, nor hard living, but for the hard drinking. Yet hard as it is, or, rather, *soft* as it is, on the part of the drinkers, the drinking will go on, as long as the club-box lives, and moves, and hath its being, in the dry and thirsty climate of the ale-house. A paragraph in the *Labourers' Friend* asserts that out of 9000 societies reported, 8000 were held at the ale-house.

There is scarcely a greater contradiction than the association of the club and the cup—of the means of saving with the means of wasting; they have no moral amalgam; it is the unnatural alliance of frugality with profligacy; it is like the marriage of a pattern husband with a slattern wife—they together verify the old pagan fable of the tub of Danaus,

that was full of holes, whose daughters were condemned to be perpetually filling it, while all that was laboriously poured in as wastefully and hopelessly ran out.

Like Danaus' tub  
Is the public-house club,  
Their customers' mouths are the holes—  
Ill spared is the chink  
That's wasted in drink,  
To the bane of their bodies and souls!

The immense power in the hands of the working men to promote their own social comfort and independence, is demonstrated by the fact that they are spending fifty-seven millions a year in ardent spirits, beer, and tobacco, equal to an income of sixteen shillings a week to nearly one million four hundred thousand people! Surely, if so much can be spared for the indulgence of bad habits, a tenth of it could be easily diverted to the cultivation of good ones. The writer heard a story in Manchester of a calico-printer, who, on his wedding day, was persuaded by his wife to allow her two half pints of ale a day as her share. He rather winced at the bargain, for though a drinker himself, he would have preferred a perfectly sober wife. They both worked hard, and he, poor man, was seldom out of the public-house, as soon as the factory closed. The wife and husband seldom saw much of each other except at breakfast; but as she kept things tidy about her, and made her stinted and even selfish allowance for housekeeping meet the demands upon her, he never complained. She had her daily pint, and he, perhaps, had his two or three quarts, and neither interfered with the other, except that at odd times she succeeded, by dint of one little gentle artifice or another, to win him home an hour or two earlier at night, and, now and then, to spend an entire evening in his own house; but these were rare occasions. They had been married a year, and on the morning of their wedding anniversary, the husband looked askance at her neat and comely person with some shade of remorse, as he said, 'Mary, we'n had no holiday since we were wed; and, only that I haven't a penny in the



world, we'd take a jaunt down to the village to see thee mother.'

'Wouldst like to go, John?' said she, softly, between a smile and a tear, so glad to hear him speak so kindly—so like old times. 'If thee'd like to go, John, I'll stand treat.'

'Thou stand treat,' said he, with half a sneer, 'Hast got a fortun, wench?'

'Nay,' said she, 'but I'n gotten the pint o'ale.'

'Gotten what?' said he.

'The pint o'ale,' said she.

John still didn't understand her, till the faithful creature reached down an old stocking from under a loose brick up the chimney, and counted out her daily pint of ale in the shape of 365 three pences (*i. e.*) 4*l.* 11*s.* 3*d.*, and put them into his hand, exclaiming, 'Thou shalt have thee holiday, John!'

John was ashamed, astonished, conscience-smitten, charmed, wouldn't touch it. 'Hasn't thee had thy share? Then I'll ha' no more,' he said. He kept his word. They kept their wedding-day with mother—and the wife's little capital was the nucleus of a series of frugal investments that ultimately swelled out into a shop, a factory, warehouses, a country seat, carriage, and, for ought I know, a Liverpool mayor!

Drink is the desolating demon of Great Britain. We have spent in intoxicating drinks during the present century *as much as would pay the national debt twice over!* There are 180,000 gin-drinkers in London alone, and in that city three millions a-year are spent in gin. In thirteen years 249,000 males and 183,920 females were taken into custody for being drunk and disorderly.

In Manchester, not less than a million a-year is spent in profligacy and crime. In Edinburgh there are one thousand whisky-shops, one hundred and sixty in one street; and yet the city contains only two hundred bread-shops. In Glasgow the poor-rates are 100,000*l.* a-year. 'Ten thousand,' says Alison, 'get drunk every Saturday-night, are drunk all day Sunday and Monday, and not able to return to work till Tuesday or Wednesday. Glasgow spends 1,200,000*l.*, annually, in

drink ; and 20,090 females are taken into custody for being drunk.' And what are some of the normal results of such appalling statistics ? *Insanity, pauperism, prostitution, and crime.*

As to the *insanity* affiliated on drink, the Bishop of London states, 'that of 1271 maniacs, whose previous histories were investigated, 649, or more than half of them, wrecked their reason in drinking.' As to its *pauperism*, it is estimated that not less than two-thirds of our paupers are the direct or indirect victims of the same fatal vice.

As to its *prostitution*, its debauching influence is remotely traceable in the 150,000 harlots of London, and their awful swarms in all our large towns and cities.

And as to its relation to *crime*. In Parkhurst prison, it is calculated that four hundred out of five hundred juvenile prisoners are immured there as the incidental results of parental debauchery.

The Chaplain of the Northampton county jail lately informed the writer, that 'of three hundred and two prisoners in this jail during the last six months, one hundred and seventy-six attribute their ruin to drunkenness. Sixty-four spent from 2s. 6d. to 10s. a-week in drink ; fifteen spent from 10s. to 17s. ; and ten spent all their savings. Is it not remarkable,' he adds, 'that out of four hundred and thirty-three prisoners in this jail, I have not had one that has one sixpence in a savings bank ; nor above six that ever had a sixpence in one. On the contrary, I have many members of friendly societies, of course unsound ones, which, with two or three exceptions, all meet at public-houses, and there they not only learned to drink, but became familiarized with crime.'

The influence of the alehouse in consolidating those anti-domestic habits which lead men into evil companionship and crime, is strikingly illustrated in the case of the canal and railway 'navvies,' as they are called. The peculiar nature of the employment of these men leading them to strange and distant places beyond their homes, where being unknown, there is little compromise of character, induces a nomadic course of life, as wild and irresponsible as that of

the Tartars. Great numbers of them have been recently employed in Northamptonshire, and the County Chaplain tells me, 'nearly every second man in the jail for the last six months has worked on the railroad.'

Perhaps not less than two-thirds of the whole number of 'navvies' in the kingdom have passed through the jails since the cessation of railway labour. Yet the wages of these men to the number of 240,306 averaged 40*l.* a-year each, in the aggregate 10,260,366*l.* a-year; but when the railways were done, their money was done, their character was done, their good habits were done, and themselves done in every way.

Judge Erskine declared at the Salisbury Assizes in 1844, that 'ninety-nine cases out of every hundred were through strong drink.' Judge Coleridge added, at Oxford, that he never knew a case brought before him which was not, directly or indirectly, connected with intoxicating liquors. And Judge Patteson capped the climax at Norwich by stating to the Grand Jury, 'If it were not for this drinking, you and I should have nothing to do.'

Of the 7018 charges entered at Bow-street Police-office, last year (1850), half of them were for being drunk and incapable, and if you add to these the offences indirectly instigated by intoxication, the proportion rises to at least 75 per cent. It is significantly added, 'a great and sudden diminution ensued upon the public-houses being compelled to close at twelve o'clock on Saturday nights.' These are the blushing, guilty, damning facts, that disfranchise the alehouse from the right of being the poor man's club-house; but even the alehouse, disastrous as it is, is not the most formidable enemy to the stability of a club. It is possible, a club may outlive the constant drainage of the tavern; but the principle of an uniform payment which prevails in all the old clubs, like a pulmonary disease, is absolutely fatal to institutional existence. It is an aggregate suicide; such a club can no more help running out than the sand of an inverted hour-glass; its course is but a question of time. Between A.D. 1795 and A.D. 1832, 19,787 societies deposited their rules with the Clerks of the peace. On the

expectation of life at eighteen years, not one of these societies ought, in thirty-seven years, to have died a natural death; yet, in 1836, only 5,409 of them were in existence, the others having become defunct or bankrupt. 'The Lodges of the Odd Fellows, a great society, which began in the early part of the present century, *have not had an average duration of fifteen years*, a period obviously inadequate to fulfil the purposes of such a society. In 1843, two hundred and twenty-five lodges closed for want of funds, and many more applied for help; in 1847, eighty-one lodges, and in 1848, one hundred and thirty-eight lodges, on an average, more than one hundred in a year, were broken up from the funds being insufficient.'

From our remarks generally, we come to the conclusion, that the two great essential principles of a sound Provident Society, are first, GOOD TABLES; and secondly, GOOD MANAGEMENT. No management can long escape the ruinous issue of inaccurate tables, nor can the best tables continue to survive the operation of uniformly bad management. Hence, both are indispensable to the permanent solvency of a society. Now, it is on the genuine solid grounds of a stable, robust institution, that we recommend to the common sense and adhesion of the working classes, that system of investments called 'the Becher Club,' because, first, the Becher Club is founded on correct *tables*. *Every member pays according to his age on entering the society*, and on this principle only can the payments become sufficient to secure the benefits proposed. The ruinous and clearly unfair system of an uniform scale of contributions we have illustrated by the past experience and present prospects of the Odd Fellows' societies; societies whose name is an obvious misnomer, unless it be meant '*the odds are against*' any of them making an even return for the uniformly even payments of their members. In 1844, no less than 20,000 members left its lodges. Wherever the principle prevails, of each member paying the same sum, whatever his age may be, the ultimate insolvency of that society is inevitable.

It may not be immediately perceptible; the minute out-

goings, whose ultimate congeries cause the run upon its ill-starred bank and put a final stop to its issues, accumulate slowly at first, and insidiously, as the steel particles gather upon the lungs of the knife grinder; but consumption sets in at last, and all the cod-liver patchings of honorary subscriptions, central grants, diminished club-pay, or other shifts, can only defer for a brief adjournment the oncoming catastrophe.

Like a shipwrecked crew that abridge their miserable rations to prolong them at a point just short of starving, as if they would temporize with famine and haggle about the niggard and unwelcome terms of death, but can't outrun the hard bargain at last, so all the old club systems are embarked upon a clumsy raft that can't hold out for sheer want of provisions, even if they fall upon no foul weather, such as a bankrupt treasurer or absconding secretary, to expedite their foundering.

It stands to reason, that a man entering a lodge at forty, must be twenty-two years nearer that time of life when the sickness and infirmities of age usually come on, than the youth that enters at eighteen. Common sense suggests, that each man should pay in proportion to his liabilities; men do so in every other department of the business of life; and what constitutes the club an exception? Old men must, in the course of nature, be more burdensome than young men. If to secure 1*l.* sick allowance at twenty require 2*l.* 7*s.* a-year, it would require 4*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.* for a man at forty years of age. Look at the difficulty into which the Odd Fellows have brought themselves, by overlooking these plain fundamental principles of institutional stability.

'It would require,' says Mr. Neison, a well-known actuary, '3,000,000*l.* to bring the Manchester Unity of Odd Fellows out of their difficulties, and if they went on at their present rate of contribution, 10,000,000*l.* would be required to fulfil all their engagements. In Manchester itself,' he adds, 'there are six lodges, established on an average twelve years, containing 530 members, and possessing just 91*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.*, less than one-twelfth of the entrance-money which must have been paid into the lodges. Again, there are twelve

other lodges, established for an average period of four and a-quarter years only, and containing 613 members, and their total amount of funds is only 313*l.* 15*s.* And further, out of one hundred lodges, containing 1080 members, the whole of their accumulated capital does not amount to 13*s.* per member. In all these cases, every member must have paid one guinea or more for entrance; so that all the funds for purposes of relief have been exhausted, though their duration has been so short. In what state are the lodges generally? I know, that in every district there will be found one or two popular, favourite, or what is sometimes called 'shirt-neck' lodges, in which honorary members are made, where respectable tradesmen enter, and which, from their popularity attract a large number of young members, thus securing for a little longer time a somewhat more healthy, or rather less diseased appearance; but I know, also, that these are rare exceptions, few and far between. The rule is insolvency, and the great mass of the lodges are not in a condition to meet the full demands coming upon them.' 'Truly,' Mr. Greig observes, 'these so-called 'friendly societies' are mere lotteries, where those who are sick the soonest, or die the youngest, have all the prizes; while the blanks are reserved for those who contribute the longest, and have, therefore, the most powerful claim upon their full share of the funds.' *The allowance of one-fourth sick pay for cases of incurable sickness, in the Becher Club system, is an excellent rule.* Such cases are found to be rare, but this only enhances the importance of the provision—the allowance, small as it is, would probably exceed the average pay from the parish, and would intercept the independence of the poor man on his hopeless road to the Union, and bid him turn back to his own home again.

*The Becher society's exclusion of members from its benefits, who shall have justly forfeited them by fraud, by disease contracted by profligacy and drunkenness, or by felony, is a feature equally valuable in a financial and moral point of view.*

It is my humble conviction, that if such societarian principles were generally established, the influence on public morals would be incalculable. Expulsion from such a

club would become a national brand; for the club itself would naturally assume the form of a national gauge of social character.

The Becher Club is happy in the second essential feature of a permanent society—viz., GOOD MANAGEMENT.

Its management humbly seeks its illustrious type in the national constitution of peers and commons, in a mixed directory, consisting of both honorary and ordinary members—the former, from their education and experience, are able to afford sound and wholesome counsel—from their position, to control—and from their influence, to promote the interests of the society; and the latter, as identified in sympathies, interests, and even prejudices, with the main body of the contributors, are calculated to inspire the confidence, and attract the attention of their fellow-operatives. We want to see more and more of this combination of the two classes. It promotes that mutual intercourse, reliance, and amicable feeling, which forms a bond of union between the successive layers of the commonwealth that, like the old Roman cement, hardens into a mass that stands together for ages, alike against tumult from within or invasion from without.

As an illustration of the value of such a management, look again at the exclusively operative government of the old club system, with none but operatives at the helm of affairs; it presents all the political evils of what is called 'class legislation,' with the disadvantage of being administered by the less-educated and responsible class; 'and the result,' says Neison, 'is, that the real and essential objects of the order have been overlooked, and rendered secondary to idle pomp and parade. Those funds which were meant to provide for disease and old age have been squandered in the follies and bubbles of youth.' A gaudy and expensive silk flag, gilded and flaunting, like Jezebel's petticoats, out of the window of an alehouse, signalizes the lodge anniversary. The sly old publican, in dressing his club victims in similar sashes, knew what would attract the vulgar eye, and when he would seduce the young citizen's heart from a worthier and more natural union with its equals in age and

station, he woos them into the treacherous embrace of the old system by setting his band of music to the delusive tune—

And ye shall *walk in silk attire,*  
 And siller have to spare,  
 Gin ye'll consent to join the club  
 Nor think on frugal mair.

*Another striking good and politic rule of the Becher Club, is the compelling all members paying for sick allowance also to contribute for a deferred annuity of at least half the amount.*

This rule is a great security against fraud. No doubt, numbers enter lodges having concealed ailments and defects of health and constitution, not always, nor easily detected by the club-doctor. Now, if such a man's health be so defective as to cause him to make unusual claims on the sick fund, that very fact would probably render his life of shorter duration, and, consequently, give him an inferior chance of becoming an annuitant; and thus the loss to the one fund would be compensated by the gain on the other. It is also an eligible rule of the Becher society, to enable members to secure all its benefits by a single payment down, or to reduce their payments at the rate of one penny on each contribution, or to remove from a lower to a higher class. For instance; a member at twenty years of age, by paying down at once 18s.  $2\frac{1}{4}d.$ , will lessen his monthly payments by one penny, and so on for each 18s.  $2\frac{1}{4}d.$  he may be able to advance. Again; the same member, by a single payment of 23l. 13s. 1d. may secure, at once, 10s. a-week in sickness, 5s. a-week after sixty-five years of age, and 10l. at his death. As trade fluctuates, and the sun does not always shine, the old proverb, 'make hay while the sun shines,' may be better realized through the Becher Club than by any other means within reach of the operative classes. Further, if a man altered his plans, and *proposed to emigrate*, another law of the society enables him to turn his contributions into a capital to travel on, by the sale, at its full value, of his interest in the society. In short, to those who understand the constitution of these societies, there can be no question



as to the superiority of the Becher Club to any other existing system of popular investments. Were its real security, and *boná fide* advantages known and appreciated in proportion to their worth, they would rapidly multiply their constituents by twenty times their present list of members. Sound rules, sound tables, and sound government, cannot fail to secure sound and solid benefits as their necessary results.

Her late gracious Majesty Queen Adelaide, whose charities were only rivalled by the discretion that regulated their distribution, stamped the sanction of her royal testimony upon the Becher Club, by requesting its extension beyond the original twelve-mile circuit, with Stourbridge as its centre, so as to include the parishes of Great and Little Witley, which her Majesty honoured by her residence. The total amount of deposits in savings banks for England and Wales, on 20th of November, 1848, was 25,371,176*l.*; for Scotland, 1,080,191*l.*; for Ireland, 1,358,061*l.*; and for the Islands in the British seas, 236,710*l.* Total 28,046,139*l.* In such a tabular statement, we have the true solution of the contrast presented between the general condition of the working classes in the sister kingdoms.

All the facts in this paper exhibit a boundless field for social regeneration, and demonstrate the abundant material there is in the hands of the working-classes themselves for their own economic and moral elevation.

Next to a really national system of sound Christian education, I know of no scheme so likely to benefit the working classes, as the establishment in every locality of a well-ordered provident society. 'Under a scientific and amply-developed system,' says Mr. Neison, 'friendly societies would be calculated, in a short time, to completely remove the cause of nearly all that distress, poverty, and misery, which haunt our manufacturing towns, and fill the Unions with the working classes of the country; but owing to the imperfect and unstable foundation on which they are at present built, instead of being a help and support to a poor man, they involve him in those difficulties for which he might otherwise have provided.'

Such a moral and social revolution might be effected through these institutions, if well-conducted, as the world has never witnessed, nor history ever had the gratification to record. The increasing intelligence of the age must shortly overtake the subject, and deal with it as its grave importance to the social welfare deserves. In concluding our subject, how shall I paint the moral, social, and religious contrast daily acted, and wrought out in all their miserable or merry details, between the spend-thrift and the save-thrift. We take two men as we find them, the drunken and improvident man that builds his house upon 'the sand,' and the sober and saving man that builds upon 'the rock,' and let us see how they each meet the trials of that day when 'the rains descend, and the floods come, and the winds blow, and beat upon that house,' which they respectively build. Let us see how the one 'falls, and great is the fall thereof;' and how the other stands, because it is founded upon a rock.'

#### THE HOUSE BUILT UPON THE SAND

Is usually situate in the darkest, dirtiest, dimalest part of the town, beyond the beat of highway-rate, poor-rate, sewer-rate, or any other rate, except the curse-and-quarrel-rate, with which the wretched tenants are for ever rating each other. The only thing that bears a hint of any value is the land, every square-inch of which is bricked over, and vaulted under, close and foetid as a city cemetery, as if the earth had not another acre to spare, and man must be content to occupy as little surface as possible, to leave more room to grow food to feed him. Human beings are stalled in these crammed and crowded bins, the only difference between them and the cattle being the better victualling of the latter. The rain, that like a heavenly unction pours fertility upon other quarters, on this spot only multiplies mud, and peninsulates every house and entry with a moat of puddle, exhaling with industrious hostility the retributive penalties of sanitary neglect in a continuous malaria, generating every type of rheumatic, typhus, and other malignant fevers. The high wind that, like the rough fidelity of an old friend, dis-

turbs, but purifies the stagnant atmosphere of every other spot, here serves but to aggravate the local factors by the larger circulation of their nuisance, accumulating the dilapidations in stock, by the tottering down of more ruined chimneys, and the forcible ejection of additional slates and pantiles. The only quiet, and, by comparison even reverent phenomenon in the district, is the indigenous smoke engendered in their homes and factories, which perpetually hangs hovering over it, like the filial veil of the Patriarch's sons, partially hiding the infirmity and nakedness of its parental landscape.

The very frosts, that like a sharp-humoured sarcasm provoke the interchange of mutual hospitalities among their happier fellow-citizens, seems here to freeze more bitterly than elsewhere, and seal up every cracked door, and broken casement, with a stuffing of old rags hardly spared from their shivering wearers' limbs, waving in the wind as intelligible signals of distress, or stiffening in the cold as if in predictive intimation of their owners' fate, whom vice and its matricidal offspring, penury, had socially worn to tatters like them! It is among these grim neighbours you are to search for 'the house built upon the sand,' and if you dare venture after nightfall under a roof whose ill-chosen foundations may bring down its ruins upon you, on that barren social sand of an improvident drunkard's heart, which grows nothing green—that dry sand, whose insatiable thirst every tide leaves dry and thirsty still—that dull sand, that only retains any impression made upon it till the next flood of inundating drink obliterates it—that treacherous sand, that has engulfed many a pretty little craft that mistook it for an anchorage—that suicidal sand, that must be worthless so long as it lies on the brink of those depths that drown it every day—that wretched sand, that is itself a heap of wrecks and fragments lashed by the waves of intemperate fury from its native rocks, and spewed out, as if the sea of life were sick of it, upon a shore of weeds and dreary waste—on such a sand the improvident man builds the house that is to be his home, and the home of the wretched squaw his wife, and of his children.

There he is to rear the disastrous duplicates, who are to repeat himself to the contamination and misery of another generation. On his model a characteristic progeny is to be formed, destined, like devil's Nazarites from the womb, to be the plague and pest, the corrupted and corruptors, of their future humankind, at once a burthen and a bane to their contemporaries; like himself, he and they shall be the *cryptogamia*—the *fungi* of society, vegetating at its gate-posts, rotting its timbers, betraying its unsoundness, and accelerating its decay. Degenerate, deleterious, abandoned, the wretched character sees no hope of relief but in its own destruction; no refuge but in escape from itself. The devilish charm of drink holds him spell-bound within a fatal circle, drawn with alternate cups and rags, and he cannot break from its toils.

Drink is the Delilah that has shorn him of his strength. He cannot 'go out and shake himself as at other times,' for 'the Lord hath departed from him!'

Poor dram-struck wretch—he is cup-crazed! Drink has put out his eyes! Like the blind Samson in the mill, he grinds in a malt-house; and Philistine lords and commons make game of his prostituted strength. But, 'my merry masters,' I would have you beware how you trifle with such giant besotments too long; it is dangerous sport. Like the old Judge, he may pull a house down about *your* ears, as well as his own. You have suffered this Samson-vice to grind on in the moral blindness of its victims; take heed lest it realise on your hands a civil Frankenstein, whose monstrous hypostasis shall dog the footsteps of its social progenitor, affiliating on the homicide-neglect that quickened it a punitive and terrible re-action, in the cost, misery, and shame of its hideous subsistence!

The improvident drunkard dies as he lived, without a thought, or care, or one provision for the morrow. The rags upon his back made him a sorry scarecrow to warn others off the alehouse; but their reversion would not pay the sexton for the hole he dug to bury him. He had been so often 'dead-drunk' that Death, as if indignant at the repeated simulations of his office, smote the drinker

really dead at last; and 'the house built upon the sand,' like the earth that 'swallowed up Korah and his company,' engulfs within its voracious maw, wife, children, and every living inmate that belonged to him! He had swallowed his children piecemeal, as at the banquet of a Thyestes, before, his ruin realized the filicidal fable of Saturn, in swallowing his whole family, in the end. It was his last draught this side Lethe; his next will be the cup, not of 'cold water to cool his tongue,' but filled to the brim with 'weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.'

Yet yonder fellow-workman of his had all the while no higher wages than his own, nor a better choice of neighbourhood to build his house upon, and nearly twice his number of children; but his neighbour was more man than animal—he was a wise rather than a 'knowing one,' and he and his children inhabited

#### THE HOUSE BUILT UPON A ROCK.

It was harder, perhaps, to get out the foundations, but then it was all the stronger for it. And what was the kind of rock he built upon but the solid basis of an unassailable Christian character? An honesty that through fair weather and foul, against wind or wave, sunshine or the dark, comes out still a rock: an industry that, in spite of all monotony of spot or lot, in the discharge of every debt and duty, 'keeps its head above water,' like a rock in the standing where Providence had fixed it—a forethought that takes a high but not haughty view of things beyond it, in its exemplary provisions for the future, like the cliff that is at once a beacon and observatory to the horizon that surrounds it; a hospitality that bids the hungry wayfarer welcome to its simple board—in the beautiful image of Scripture, 'Like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land;' a sobriety and firmness that, when the tempest roars above its brow, and the waves dash themselves to pieces at its feet, and wind and tide brawl round it like a drunken frenzy, stands lofty and immovable as the rock in the seas; and a piety whose sacred melody

was pitched to no earthly tune, but owes its sweet household harmony, like the sculptured granite of Thebais, to the vocalizing light of heaven! This is 'the rock' on which the homely philosopher and Christian builds; and it stands the onslaught of the storm when, like the pulses of Creation in her fever, conflicting elements beat never so furiously against its walls. But let us steal a glimpse at the interior of the dwelling. How happy mother looks down on the chubby-cherub face of Baby Number Seven, asleep on her knees, so like his father, in all his innocence, playfulness, simplicity, and everything except the tint of anxiety at odd times, when work was scarce and wages low, and their appetites had rather the start of their provender. There is actually a bit of lace on baby's cap, for it had been christened that morning, and the old christening cap, that had stood as a sort of mute sponsor for all seven of them, looked neat, and clean, and white as ever, as if it had been bleached over and over again with its repeated washings in yonder spring water, which flowed by them, clear as their mother's conscience, soft as her heart, and unsullied as her character. The very cradle into which baby will be beguiled just now seems to smell sweeter and rock gentler than most other infant equipages. And, mark you those six tin cans, ranged orderly and tidily along the table, burnished bright as mirrors, that reflects in each shining oval the merry phiz of its particular milk-bibber. The young tee-totallers had never tasted anything stronger than warm porridge in their lives, and yet looked all the fairer and comelier for their diet, like the pulse-fed Hebrew youths at Babylon. They are waiting, not for supper, for that has been ready this half hour; mother is never behindhand. 'I wonder where's father,' says Arthur, No. 1, the biggest boy, at fourteen, who has lately got a job at work, and, coming home hungry after his day's labour, wants his supper; 'will he be long, mother?' 'Not long, I dare say, Artee,' said mother; 'but ye can tak thy porridge, lad, an ye're sharp set; but ye know thee father likes his childern to be at meals wi' him.'

Aye, and the boy was old enough to remember many a

scant meal years ago, when father's share was often shared again among the hungry little ones who were too little to appreciate the sacrifice; so he said no more, but waited cheerfully. Mother had put him upon his honour, and the lad had a sturdy sense of filial honour to appeal to; he had already learned to be proud of his father, and it was his proficiency in that lesson that reciprocated the sentiment, and made his father proud of him. At length the latch is gently lifted; the door opens to the family cry, 'Here's father!' but it's '*only* Emily,' come from the milliner's, where she was apprenticed, to sup at home that night.

A kiss all round from 'sister,' indemnified their momentary disappointment, and the fair girl opened her little packet of playthings, from the toy-shop, amid the repeated cheers of the little public of her contemporaries; mother looking on with a glistening eye that did not drop a tear, only because she had too much of the real sentiment in her to spare tears for gratuitous ones. Emily had received a year's interest on her first deposit in the savings bank that day, and expended the sum, as a sort of consecration of the first fruits of her principal, to the gratification of her little brothers and sisters. She had asked father if she might do it that morning, as they walked away to their several places of work together, and the fond old man held his daughter's little taper hand in his own as they parted, squeezed it with a fondlier emotion than usual as he answered her, 'It is thy own, lass; do with it what thee likes: bless thee!' The toys whiled away an hour before the children turned another wistful thought at the great saucepan simmering their porridge on the fire, but the simmering itself grew impatient; every now and then up bobbed the white head of the milk to the top of the pot, took a rapid survey of the apartment, angrily sputtered over a morsel into the fire, and instantly bobbed down again, as if it were ashamed of its petulance, or were afraid it had gone too far. The children's mirth was gradually settling down into stillness and occasional whispers that 'Father was never so late as that before.' The baby was sunk into a sleep so profound as to be almost mesmeric in its influence on the unoccupied spec-

tators. Mother knitted on at a Jersey with greater earnestness than usual, as her wont was, when any shade of anxiety flitted across the ordinarily tranquil disk of her experience. The little Skye terrier, a pup of 'the master's,' moved about uneasily, as if under the influence of some instinctive presentiment. Even the canary, that on their sister's arrival had deafened its little attached auditory like an emulous *prima donna* with its shrillest torrent of notes, dropped its singing into an occasional chirp upon its perch, as it moved its little head aside in the hearkening attitude of one that was rather hard of hearing, and begged the company to repeat that observation. The excitement in the saucepan grew painfully vocal and infectious; its simmering had long since boiled into a restive fury that would not stand still; and at length mother removed it from over the fire, and put it to sulk and cool on the hob. Edward, the second boy, could bear the suspense no longer. 'Mother,' said he, 'it's hard upon eight o'clock; father should ha' been home these two hours; shall I run and see what ails him? We shan't see the pictures he promised us to-night.'

'Go, Eddard,' she said, rather solemnly; 'and God Almighty go with thee, my child, and bring thee father back to us.'

The mother rose from her seat, and saying within herself, 'The children will be best a-bed, and out of the way, if there's any mischance; let them eat their suppers before they learn what may spoil their appetites.' She poured out their porridge, and said the blessing in a tone slightly tremulous, as she thought of *his* voice who was more used to utter it. The children eat their evening meal in silence, and presently prepared for bed. It was a family *tableau*, the more precious because of its rarity, to notice the clean cotton home-spun of their inner garments, as one after another of the little innocent citizens threw off their clothes, bare as so many bits of statuary, and with a natural grace assumed each a well-patched night-gown, and kneeling like Samuel in the lined ephod, which his mother made him, joined in the evening sacrifice of family prayer.

It was barely nine o'clock, but the uniformly regular and



domestic habits of the man made his absence even at that early hour the ground of some anxiety to his family; the more so, as on this particular evening he had promised Emily and the two elder boys to take them to the exhibition of a panorama of the Holy Land.

He could afford them an occasional indulgence of this kind, for he squandered nothing on selfish sensualities of his own. 'Grey hairs were here and there upon him, yet he knew it not.' They were not the premature indices of trouble bleached in some dark transits of bye-gone sorrow, but the witnesses of habitual sobriety and seriousness of thought, investing the honest yeoman with a natural dignity—a kind of aristocracy of age. The house he lived in, though a humble one, was suited to his family wants, and, moreover, every brick his own. It was his first savings bank, that house, and laboriously he wrought, and sacrificed, and saved penny by penny, as if he had piled it together brick by brick; and it was a proud day the first meal the family ate under their own roof. The children looked excitedly at their father as they sat down to it, when the goodman slightly faltered in saying the grace—'For these and all His mercies, the Lord's name be praised.'

Philosophers, patriots, heroes, and even martyrs, make room for this man amongst you! There is not one of you need be ashamed of such a competitor for your glorious laurels. Spare a leaf or two to weave a chaplet for the chivalry of home, for the vanquisher in the sharp fight with poverty and toil, family burthen, and scant wages. Edward returned about ten o'clock from the furnaces where his father worked, with the tidings, which somewhat relieved them, that he had been sent on short notice to a neighbouring town by railway, on his master's business, and might be expected home later in the evening.

Eleven o'clock arrived, a later hour than the children scarcely remembered him to have been out of his bed, and their mother's growing uneasiness at length infected the group of the three elder ones. The four juniors were long fast asleep, except baby, who now and then gave vent

to an unusual restlessness, by a cry that called up mother to its tiny cot-side.

Midnight at length passed; the children down stairs would not go to bed, though a sleep heavy as their hearts every now and then overpowered them, as if their long flow of tears, like loss of blood stanchd by a swoon, had a narcotic influence on the mind, to suspend its grief in slumber. Mother opened the door for perhaps the fiftieth time that long vigil night, for she heard footsteps in the street which she thought might be her husband's. Nearly opposite her was another watcher, and their doors several times were opened simultaneously that night. At that house was a poor wife, with a sickly crying infant in her arms, waiting in cold and hunger, and trembling for the return of a drunken husband. He came at last, reeling, cursing, and fighting, between two policemen, and the wretched wife saw them drag him past her to the station, too drunk to recognise his own door!

The contrast between her wretched neighbour's lot and her own happier one, seemed to quicken mother's foreboding anguish; she felt she had not been thankful enough, perhaps, and therefore God had issued the fiat to her—'Call me not Naomi, but call me Mara, for the Lord hath dealt bitterly with me,' and then she checked herself, and inwardly prayed for more submission and greater thankfulness. She turned within doors again, and found Emily awake and weeping. The poor girl was pale with terror, and when her poor mother irresolutely shook her head, as if she was not sure but a good cry would do herself good too, Emily whispered, not to wake her brothers—

'Mother! mother! I saw him in my dream, just now; and there was blood upon my father's face!'

'Hush, child!' implored her mother; 'thee must na dream that way, or ye'll doubt God when ye waken. Hearken, Emily, there's a cart stopped anunst our door.'

'A what? a cart?' screamed the girl, with a look of piteous horror. 'Mother, *the cart was in my dream, too!*' and, rushing out of the house and across the street, she bounded up to the back of a vehicle that *had* stopped

opposite them, and before the men that accompanied it could prevent her, she had torn open the door of one of the patent funeral carriages, wherein, as if in mockery of lying in state, was stretched out the mutilated corpse of her father! He had been killed that evening, with several other victims to railway mismanagement, on a distant part of the line.

Ah, I have no heart to paint the agony of the abrupt widowhood and the cries of orphanage, the sleepless night and desolate morrow, and the increased struggle to live on, that ensued upon the loss of a father. Enough for our purpose to state he had insured a moderate annuity for his widow for her life in some such a society as that I have recommended. Their rent was safe, because the house was their own; and the widow and orphans, instead of a hopeless consignment to the union, wrought on, and kept their little all together. Their father's memory raised them friends, which their own character retained, and his admirable example was as much paternal to their virtues as to their being. He left no will, but, upwards of a year after his death, as mother was re-fashioning his waistcoat into a shape to fit her eldest son, a little wad of red paper, scarcely the size of a pea, fell out of a small watch-pocket, and the boy unrolled it with a feeling of almost solemn reverence for something which had been his fathers. His own countenance reddened to the hue of the little slip of paper as he read it; his eye dilated strangely, then filled with tears; he jumped up, flung his cap to the ceiling, reeled violently round on one leg, danced in a kind of delicious *delirium tremens* round the room, ran up stairs, then ran down again—drew the whole family's attention to him. 'What's the matter?' 'Wouldn't tell them—guess what! Mother, my love to thee! children, hurrah! That's your sort—father—father.' At that now sacred word, Arthur stopped dancing, and, breaking hysterically into a fresh fount of tears, at last found voice enough to dole out the discovery, 'Father—had—a second class—railway insurance—ticket, and it's worth—mother—five hundred pounds!' His last characteristic act was one of insurance for his family.

The magnanimous man, a leader of the forlorn hope that scales the oft impregnable redoubts of toil and poverty, planted the colours of his small but heroic class in the breach in which he fell, constituting his very death an anti-type of the gallant life of sacrifice for others which preceded it, himself content to wear a martyr's crown, that theirs might be the victory.

Peace to his ashes !

# ON PRISON DISCIPLINE.

BY CAPTAIN FULFORD.

SUPERINTENDENT OF STAFFORD GAOL.

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THE houses of Parliament may sit in committee for months, publish ponderous tomes of evidence as to the most desirable description of prison discipline, and amiable philanthropists fondly expect that the magic influence of a three months' imprisonment will succeed in radically reforming a villain of forty years growth, without reducing the number of our prison population one in a thousand, unless the whole length and breadth of the land takes up the cause of the lower classes.

According to some of the many plans proposed, there is no doubt that almost all the prisoners who are confined here for any length of time leave the prison with the resolution of amending their lives; and no doubt they would do so if they had the least chance in their favour; but going back to the place from whence they came, immediately falling in with their former associates in the crowded lodgings in which most of them live, their return is hailed as an opportunity for a festival, they are converted into heroes, and return naturally to their former courses.

The population from whence our gaols are filled have up to now been scarcely, if at all, the better for the spreading influence of education. Children of the poorest classes, accustomed to look upon society at large as their fair game, they had never (at least a large proportion) even had the benefit of learning by rote the few things which have been dinned into the class next above them; consequently they have no moral sense, they know no

distinction between right and wrong; they know that if they are found out in any crime they will suffer punishment, but it brings no disgrace in the circle in which they live.

In this county, from the various descriptions of labour required in the different manufactories, children, almost as soon as they can walk, can earn their bread. Poor little wretches! what chance have they, thrown from the age of six and seven years among the rudest and most ignorant? Of course they know no language but oaths, no prayers but blasphemy—their greatest pride is to imitate the manly vices of those about them.

It is a curious fact, that in the past summer the numbers in this prison have risen higher than at any former period; when it would have been natural to suppose that with such a beautiful season, such a fair field for labour and good wages, the prison would have been nearly empty; and the only way I can account for it is from the highness of wages in these parts, and the people, in consequence, only working four or five days a week, or less in many cases. All the leisure time is spent in riot and debauchery, and, rather than work, resort is had to crime to enable them to continue their wanton courses. Men at all skilled find no difficulty after imprisonment in returning to their employers, in the great works in this county; indeed it is known that several men, who are in the receipt of from twenty-five to thirty-five shillings a week in the potteries, are often in the habit of making a party to come poaching into the preserved country about, not that they are the least in want, but merely for the sport. If they are caught, they know what will happen, and look upon it with a cool indifference; being certain that after their three months are up they shall go back to their work, and come and try their luck again next year.

Not one in a hundred of the men convicted for poaching commit the crime from want, but are led into it from drinking at the beer-houses, having no other way of passing their evenings, from the present state of the *lodging-houses*, and their *want of education*.

From these facts it is concluded, that not only from the higher ground of Christian charity, but economy to the state generally, the legislature and society should go hand in hand in remedying this great evil; a law should be passed requiring all parents to send their children to school somewhere; those that could pay, should; that schools should be started under government control for all denominations, and decent accommodation provided for the people; we should soon see the pride of home supersede the present misery, at an infinitely less cost to the rate-payers; the prisons would, by degrees, reduce their numbers; and our countrymen would not then be held up to the eyes of all foreigners as the most sottish and drunken of their species.

Out of the total number of prisoners in Stafford Prison for the last year, 1340 have been totally unable to read or write, out of 3320.

There is a very good article in the present number of the *Edinburgh Review*, on juvenile crime, which seems to me to lay down the law exactly as it ought to be with regard to the class of juvenile offenders and that, if carried out, would prevent all our prisons from being inundated with children from eight years old and upwards, and the future generation would be brought up as good citizens, instead of, as now, infants who, in the middle class of life, are still under the care of a nurserymaid, being sent to gaol for offences, the most salutary punishment for which would be, in many cases, being sent to bed without their supper; and in others a good whipping from their mother. The cases are those of stealing gooseberries, apples, and the like, and trespassing in fields in pursuit of birds' nests, all very annoying to the complaining party; but when it involves the result of sending boys of eight and nine years of age to prison for a month, or indeed three months, as has happened here, it is monstrous. Children are sent here so small and so babyish that it really has been difficult to carry out the rules in their cases, and they have been sent into the female prisons to spend their term in the nursery with the women who have infants.

A prison should be a terror to evil-doers, but if such infants are sent in, who, from their age and position, are totally ignorant of right and wrong, and, from their early initiation into prison, lose that wholesome dread which will ever after render them careless of going there again (not to mention, that the stain attaching to them in many cases will prevent their well doing, were they so inclined), we lose the whole moral effect of the punishment.

No prisoner leaves this prison, or, indeed, any, where the separate system prevails, the worse, in a moral point of view, for his confinement; as, although he may occasionally have an opportunity of saying a word or two to a fellow-prisoner, such as telling his sentence, where he comes from, when going out, &c., yet, there being no uninterrupted and familiar intercourse permitted, no prisoner who is what may be termed an accidental offender, has any chance of being corrupted by the stories of the hardened villain, and all the persons with whom he does hold conversation, viz., the governor, chaplain, surgeon, and officer, all speaking quietly and civilly to him, it being, most likely, the first time in his life that such a thing has happened to him, he is by degrees civilized, and although he may again commit crime, very possibly from the natural circumstance of his returning to his former place of abode and way of living, yet I remark that these men have almost always retained a modicum of their polish.

There are a great many prisoners sent for trial to the sessions, many of whom have to remain from two to three months before trial, for what are individually very slight offences, viz., stealing coals from the pit banks, say from six to sixty lbs. weight. Now although, from the number of depre-dators, the amount of loss to the proprietors is, no doubt, very great, still it is found almost impossible to explain to the culprits, chiefly Irish, that they have committed the crime of theft, their answer being always, 'Sure I only just picked up a bit of coal I saw lying about doing nothing.' Now surely it would be better to punish these people summarily, than fill our gaols with them for such a length of time, besides putting the county to the expense of from 5*l.* to 7*l.*



to prosecute. It would be all very well for a second or third offence, and then let them be punished in proportion, and let one part of the sentence be a *good whipping*, which I hold to be a much surer way of preventing the repetition of offences than any other punishment; and as to the degradation, such an idea would never cross the mind of one in five hundred, unless instilled into him by villanous publications, which are scattered so widely abroad among the lower classes.

It would, in such a county as this, teeming with population, particularly in the towns of Wolverhampton, Stafford, Burslem, and Newcastle, be a great blessing, could there be established good, clean, decent, lodging-houses, under the direct control of the police. There can be no doubt as to its being a very good investment, as the wages of the artisans in these towns are very high, their present lodgings, for the most part, very bad and unwholesome, and they are themselves anxious to enjoy every comfort and luxury within their reach. Their only resource now is the beer-house, where they spend their evenings in drinking, gambling, quarrelling, listening to the stirring tales of poachers and thieves, or to one of their number reading one of the detestable pamphlets of the day. We trace almost the whole of the crime of this county to the lodging-house and beer-house; why there should be so many, we do not know, but surely they might be placed under more stringent rules. Why should not the beer-house keeper be himself fined for every man found drunk in his house, or coming from it; also making it illegal to pay wages in one of these houses—a practice very general, in consequence of which great part of the wages fall to the publican, either for present drink or former scores, to the great misery of the wife and children?

The number of boys committed to this prison for the quarter ending Michaelmas last is 280.

*Stafford, 24th November.*

The county prison of Stafford is a very large one, covering a space of ground amounting to nearly six and a half acres. It has been much enlarged of late years, all the additional buildings being adapted to the separate system, which now prevails in a modified degree in the greater portion of the gaol; there is, however, enough of the old building remaining to enable us to form a just conclusion as to the comparative merits between the old or associated, and the separate systems; and the present arrangement seems the best in every point of view.

The word *modified* is used as to the discipline of separate confinement in this prison, as there is no attempt to prevent the prisoners from seeing each other's faces, and such precautions are not taken as to render it *impossible* for one prisoner occasionally to exchange a word with another, as is the case in prisons where the separate system is carried out in its full sense: since, if a prisoner is confined for any length of time, and has literally no temptation of any kind to grapple with, the chances are greatly in favour of his going back to the world with the comfortable idea that he has been so many months behaving himself very well, that he has attended to, and will profit by the teaching of the chaplain, and the books he has read, whereas in point of fact his power of withstanding temptation is weakened, and on the first opportunity he falls again into his evil courses, perhaps the moment before priding himself with the thought that he should reclaim some of his companions. But the prisoners for trial are placed in separate cells on their admission, and told that they are not to speak to any of the other prisoners, are to keep their cells and themselves clean and neat, and obey all orders given by the officers over them, &c.; any disobedience being punished either by more strict confinement and loss of one or more meal. They are furnished with books and visited by the chaplain constantly, and have employment given them, such as knitting stockings, pin-heading, tailoring, or shoemaking, if they require it. After conviction, they are placed on the treadmill,

either to grind corn for the prison use, or pump water over the buildings; and of late some have been placed to work the crank-hand hard-labour machine in their cells; the latter an admirable machine for an idle fellow, as there is a dial showing the amount of work done, which there is no possibility of shirking, and which being left undone leaves the prisoner with the certain prospect of losing his meal. Some of the convicted prisoners are employed in the service of the prison, such as bakers, cooks, tailors, shoemakers, blacksmiths, carpenters, &c., as a matter of economy to the county—a point as to the propriety of which there is doubt, as, of course, the imprisonment cannot be by any means so great a punishment to a man employed at his own trade (still less if he have the interest attaching to being taught) as if he were employed in some strictly penal punishment, which punishment should be well known outside the prison, and wholesomely dreaded, as the crank machines are. The office of surgeon to a great prison such as this is, averaging more than 600 inmates, is one of great importance, requiring the greatest insight into all sorts of character, as the stories and schemes that are resorted to, to prevent being placed at hard labour, are endless and very ingenious; soap, the scrapings of the white-wash, &c., are resorted to, to get up a sickness, either to get increase of diet or respite from labour. Both the surgeon and governor see the prisoners daily, and, as far as possible, study their characters in order to guard against this, as well as to hear if they have any thing to complain of or communicate. The prisoners have prayers twice a week at present, and twice on Sunday, and a more orderly or apparently devout congregation never was; much of this may be attributed, doubtless, to the fact of a great number never having been at church before, and to their being punished if they misconduct themselves.

The great mass of the prisoners here are taken from among the colliers, boatmen, potters, and the iron-work men and tin-plate workers—people who are brought up in the roughest and most miserable manner as to morals, who are rarely or never accustomed to come in contact with any educated people, whose knowledge of right and wrong is of the most limited

kind, and whose value of human life, from the perilous trades many of them pursue, amounts to nothing. They come in here perfect savages—but one can see by quick degrees the progress of civilization going on among them. The quiet, but firm, way in which they are spoken to, the evident wish to teach them better things, the order, regularity, and discipline which prevail, seldom fail to send the prisoner back to the world, at any rate, to a certain degree civilized, if not reformed; and with certain distinct notions on the graver matters of life. Of course, among so many there is a great variety of character, and much judgment is needed in managing them.

Last March assizes, there was a man sentenced to two years' imprisonment with hard labour, for highway robbery. He is a boatman, an immense powerful fellow, apparently of a very sulky disposition. A few days after his conviction he spoke to the governor, saying he had not enough to eat: the governor explained to him that he had as much as he was entitled to, and read him the rules; this, however, did not satisfy him, and he asked to see one of the visiting justices, which he did, of course with no effect. The next day it was reported to the governor that he had broken up his cell-furniture, and threatened to murder the first officer who should go into his cell. The governor went to him, and on opening his door found him standing opposite, with one of the legs of his stool in his hand. The governor said, 'what is all this about? why do you stand so?' 'I am going to knock down the first of you who molests me.' 'Indeed,' said the governor, 'nobody wishes to do so, but I order you to pick up all these broken things, and put them at the door; for although you may knock out my brains, or those of an officer or two, you cannot be foolish enough to think you can fight against the whole force of the prison.' The prisoner said he should not do as he was ordered. 'Well, then,' said the governor, 'don't think I shall force you, only you shall neither eat nor drink till you do,' and away he went. In about three hours the man sent for the governor, and said he would do as he was ordered. It was then explained to him that, of course, he would be reported to the visiting justices, which was done on the following day, who

ordered him to receive four dozen there and then, which was duly done, and he was taken back to his cell, when he instantly demolished his wash-hand basin, the only thing remaining in the cell unbroken. He was again brought before the committee, who ordered him a month in the dark cell on bread and water. He of course was seen by the governor every day; and after he had been there a fortnight, he was asked whether, if the governor should request the justices to remit the remainder of his punishment, he would behave well? He said he would; he was accordingly released, and the next day begged the governor's pardon, with tears in his eyes, and said he was sure he should never misbehave again, and he never has; on the contrary, he has been one of the most orderly men in the prison, and will, it is hoped, go out the better for his punishment.

It appears, that the average rate of wages in this county is much higher than in the purely agricultural ones. Indeed, in many of the trades followed, the rates of wages are so high as to encourage idleness, inasmuch as sufficient money can be obtained by three or four day's work to support amply the family of a well-disposed workman for a week, besides putting by a part; and although such is the case, I am afraid this course is but rarely pursued, but all the idle time spent in drinking, and bad company. This, added to (as far as can be seen by inquiry) the preference for job-work, and constant change of place and master, consequent upon the total want of all education, and of any proper discipline of mind, are the great causes of crime in this county.

Poaching is an offence very common here, and may be traced to three causes—want, the love of the sport, and idleness. Of the first cause, there are comparatively few. I will just mention the cases of a few men now in prison, taken from their own lips.

'J. G., a labourer, a single man, lives with his mother and two sisters. Has had from twelve to thirteen shillings a-week, till lately; since that, on job for two or three days a-week at two shillings a-day. One sister is employed in the silk-factory at six shillings a-week; the other a charwoman

at one shilling a-day, and food. He has been once before in prison for poaching, and once tried and acquitted of felony; says he went but this time, in hope of getting enough game to procure a few shillings, as he had not worked for a fortnight—never saved any of his wages.’

‘J. B., brickmaker, has four shillings a-day during the brickmaking season, in the winter jobs at two shillings a-day; was in work when taken; was twelve months in prison for night-poaching, and has been five times summarily convicted for the same offence; poaches as much as he works, and sells the game to a dealer at the rate of hares and pheasants at 2s. 9d. each, partridges 2s. a brace.’

‘W. C., labourer, live with grandparents, have at the rate of twelve shillings a-week, job-work. Have not been at work a fortnight; it is not so easy to get work about Tamworth at this time of year. My grandfather is getting twelve shillings a-week; have been twice in prison for poaching; did not want for a meal; should have taken my share of the game home; liked the sport.’

‘W. B., labourer, married, four young children, pay two shillings and sixpence a-week house rent, wages twelve shillings a-week, till the day before I was taken up. Have been once before in prison for poaching; should have sold my share of the game to the game-dealer.’

‘J. A. was apprenticed to a cheese-factor at Kidderminster, only remained three years out of seven, as master would make me go to church, not allow me out of nights. I came home, and lived a year with father (a shoemaker), doing nothing; was in prison once for poaching; now I do job-work as a labourer. I have not worked in a regular way for six months, but have been off and on, at two shillings a-day; have been out poaching about three times a-week this season; sell my game to the game-dealer at ——; am fond of the sport.’

‘H. H., married, six children, eldest fifteen, out at service, youngest twelve months, house-rent four shillings a-week; am a baker, and earn about seventeen shillings a-week. Was in prison three years ago for poaching, have been out more this winter than ever I was—trade is

so bad, flour being so cheap. I should have sold my game to the dealer, there is no difficulty in selling game to private individuals.'

'J. T., single, live at lodgings, often change, am a wood-cutter, get fifteen shillings a-week in the season; just now, have been jobbing three days a-week at two shillings a-day. Was at work when this job happened; was once convicted of felony. I should have sold my share to private houses, they pay better than the game-dealers. I was not in want; I go out partly for the sport.'

'E. B., married, one child, rent two shillings and sixpence a-week. Am a brass cabinet locksmith, get from fifteen to eighteen shillings a-week, could get more. Was once in prison for neglect of work; was never out poaching before, but was persuaded to go by some men who came to my shop to have their knives sharpened. I should have eaten my share. I only went out for sport.'

'W. C., single, lives with a woman, have four children, one shilling and eightpence a-week rent. Am a labourer, had two shillings a-day till the last few days. I should have eaten my share this time, have often sold to dealers and butchers; I don't often go out, except I am hard-up for money.'

'C. C., single, lodgings one shilling and sixpence a-week. Am a labourer, had two shillings and sixpence a-day till end of harvest, have not worked since; have been constantly poaching, and have lived upon the sale of game entirely. There are so many Irish about, who work for a shilling a-day, that we cannot get employment. I could not live on a shilling a-day, as they do.'

These cases, taken promiscuously, will bear out what has been said as to the causes of poaching; and if the Game Laws were entirely abolished, the evil of men living the reckless life of game-killers would continue and with as bad consequences so long as there was a head of game to be had, because it would multiply the numbers so employed. Our great check would be to give to the police, or some other authority, power to make daily visits to the licensed game-dealers, and make them show a receipt for all the game in their possession from the parties they have bought it of;

and keep a book of sales. A great many instances might be given of miners and colliers, who have been in this prison for poaching, who were, at the time of their conviction, receiving two shillings and threepence a-day for four or five day's work a-week.

There are a great number of juvenile delinquents here ; indeed, the number of recommittals is greater among them than the adults, which may be traced to various causes, viz., the early age at which they are enabled to earn wages; and being thrown among men, tending to their early demoralization, and of course rendering them more easily enticed into crime ; also many of them are early turned adrift on the world, either from the death of one of their parents and the other marrying again, or from being natural children, and in many cases one or both parents having been transported or fled the county. These children, brought up to prison from the more distant parts of the county, handcuffed with men and women of the worst character, who on the way are making a jest of their punishments, and using the worst language it is possible to utter, find, at the expiration of their imprisonment, that it is not so bad after all. In most cases they have never been so well treated before ; they are taught to read and write, are fed, clothed, and all dread or shame of imprisonment is for ever at an end. Surely it would be a better plan to give the magistrates a greater power to treat this class of offenders—most of whom, for the first and second offence, are sent for trifling affairs—say by ordering a sound whipping, and, if again brought before them, the power to place them in a reformatory school, the parents being bound to contribute towards their expenses according to their means ; at any rate, to keep them as long as possible out of the county prison. As to the parents or guardians of these unfortunate children *voluntarily* allowing them to be placed in any permanent charitable institution, we find in this county that almost invariably they refuse. Out of a great many applications made for permission to send boys to the Philanthropic Institution near London, not more than four or five have given their consent. In one case they soon revoked



it, and in two others the boys were either expelled or ran away. This being the case, the country has a right to enforce the well bringing up of those who, either through want or neglect, omit doing so of their own accord, as a protection to society at large.

To ensure any beneficial results from penal punishment, it should be swift, certain, and uniform; as it stands now, offences are not equally punished throughout the land, either as to the amount or the rigour with which the sentence is carried out. For instance, six months' imprisonment in a prison where the discipline is severe, the amount of hard and disagreeable labour great, and the diet meagre, is a much greater punishment than in a prison where all these matters are more lax. Again, as to transportation. Few, if any, of the judges know the amount of punishment they are inflicting when they sentence a man to a term of transportation; and the general idea among the gaol population in this county seems to be that transportation means, in the shorter term of seven years, from three to four years' imprisonment in this country; and in the longer ones, the first learning a trade in one of the government prisons in this country, and then being comfortably sent out as a settler to a healthy colony; in short, being better provided for than the poor, but honest, emigrants. This surely cannot be right. If it be thought unjust to inflict our malefactors upon other countries, why keep them at home, and make them undergo a *stringent* imprisonment in this country; and, in case of their being incorrigible, let the term amount to their natural lives. But whatever is the course adopted, it would be well to let the knowledge of what it is go forth to the world; and, having finally arranged it, let the same system prevail throughout the kingdom.

Having touched upon prison discipline, crime, and punishment, a few words may suffice on the police force, now becoming general throughout England. No one can doubt that the county constabulary, so well organized as it now is, is an institution which is admirably adapted to the wants of such a county as this; and that the men com-

posing the force, their characters being carefully investigated before their admission, and their conduct afterwards being as carefully watched, in the main they do their duty zealously, fearlessly, and honestly; but even the very fact of their zealous execution of their duty may be the means of injustice being done. We all know how difficult it is to prevent a spirit of partizanship arising even in an argument between parties in ordinary life; how much more is this the case with the policeman? Aiming at being thought a smart officer, his whole object is to convict the party against whom he is witness; and although he may be perfectly free from any ill will against the party, much less of wilful perjury, still he is, in many instances, tempted to strain conversations, looks, and actions, to his view of the subject; nay, even the very words made use of by a prisoner may, from a difference in an accent, or the context being omitted, convey a totally different meaning to that which he places on them. The man may have been troublesome to him before, may have been previously convicted; or many reasons may induce a bias in the mind of the policeman, honest as he may be.

Again, in a large police force, every precaution being taken to guard against it, a black sheep may, and no doubt does, occasionally get appointed. This man, being stationed perhaps at a village, quarrels with an individual, or has some spite against one, for any reason, such as threatening to peach on him for neglect of duty, or any other cause; he has always it in his power to cook up some trumpery charge, either for assault, drunkenness, or finding him in some suspicious place, apparently for the purpose of committing a felony; and the consequence is, that the poor wretch is carried off to prison for really the offence of affronting the policeman, unless the case is very carefully looked into by the magistrate. Again, in cases of assault, particularly between women, two of them having quarrelled over the not returning of a smoothing-iron, or one having cuffed the other's child for throwing mud on her washed clothes, they join issue on the matter, and the

weakest rushes off, while in a rage, to the policeman, who, being zealous in his duty, says a summons must be taken out. By this time, both parties being cool, are as good friends as before, and beg him to let the matter drop; but no, he likes to show his activity at the petty sessions, and the poor woman is sent off to prison for three weeks, to the great distress and misery of her family, and at a considerable expense to the country, for a thing that really is not worth a moment's consideration.

For these and other reasons of the same sort, it is highly important that the policeman's evidence should be taken with the greatest caution, in order to prevent the despotic power they wield being used for bad purposes.

A good deal has lately been said as to how far the police are justified in being cognizant of thieves' haunts; but I am much inclined to think that a great number of thieves would not be convicted if the case were not so, particularly in the large towns. In many cases, however, the police, knowing that an offence is about to be committed, lay in wait to take the offenders red-handed. This is most improper, as surely their duty is to prevent crime, more than, as it were, to connive at it. Surely it is much better to do, as I am told was done at the last great Agricultural Meeting, held at Exeter—a detective officer or two of the London force attended at the railway station at Exeter, and on the arrival of each train notified to the London swell-mobsmen who arrived in it, looking forward to a fine harvest in the crowds who were there assembled, that they were well known, and would be watched if they left the station. In consequence, they all returned forthwith to town, and the effect of this very judicious arrangement was that there were not above two or three street robberies during the meeting.

Until society at large will do its duty manfully in the regeneration of the lower classes, legislation alone can go but a little way. Many people, some from idleness, some from disgust at the object before them and anxiety to get rid of the unpleasant sight, and others from morbid charity, are in the habit of giving indiscriminate relief to everyone they meet who importunes them—in either case a

source of great evil, as the vagabond habits of professed beggars—idle fellows, who find that they live a far jollier life than the industrious workman—lead to the greater proportion of crime; and, as a general rule, the more wretched and miserable the beggar may look, the more reason is there to suppose that he is doing a flourishing business. I have found on the persons of beggars committed to this prison various sums, from one shilling to four pounds. Again, with begging letters, the more authentic they look, and more names of persons known attached, the more reason is there to look upon them with suspicion. Begging being quite as much a trade as watchmaking, it behoves people to make inquiries before giving anything to a person with a begging letter; and, as a general rule, never to give charity promiscuously at the door to unknown people. If this plan were generally adopted, there would be an end to the trade, and the localities from whence the tramps started would have to take care of them; while other people would have the means, now so cruelly ill-bestowed, of doing good in their own neighbourhoods, where there are generally to be found plenty of deserving objects of charity. Some have not either the time or tact to search out these cases; but there is always either the clergyman or other person able and willing to dispense charity in a suitable manner.

# LETTERS TO A FRIEND.

BY VISCOUNT INGESTRE.

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Si quid tamen olim  
Scripseris, in Metii descendat iudicis aures,  
Et patris, et nostras, nonumque prematur in annum,  
Membranis intus positis. Delere licebit,  
Quod non edideris; nescit vox missa reverti.

*Horace.*

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MY DEAR \* \* \* \*

I propose, in the following letters, to answer your question—how I have been employing myself, and what are my plans for the benefit of the working classes? I have been astonished to find how easy it is to do good, if one is really in earnest; and I trust that others may be induced, by what I am about to relate, to make the attempt.

Believe me sincerely yours,

INGESTRE.

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## LETTER I.

MY DEAR \* \* \* \*

I was induced, not long ago, to commence my inquiries into the state of the world around me. I had often heard, as well as read, of the miseries which existed in London, and other large towns; but, not troubling myself much about the matter, was content to believe that many of the evils that were said to exist were fabulous, and that real distress was mitigated by the numerous societies instituted for the purposes of relief. I also comforted myself generally with the maxim, that rich and poor must exist in this world, and that it would be useless to attempt to alter what

was ordained. With such opinions as these, I lived. But now and then there came across me a suspicion, that, whilst I was enjoying the goods of this world, others might suffer, and that I never made an effort on my part to remedy it; occasionally soothing my conscience by a small donation to a charity sermon, or giving a beggar a mite. Providentially for me, my attention was called to the condition of the poor by the potato famine thus: I was living in a small village, where I saw the poor losing their little all, whilst I was not only comfortable, but supplied with all the necessaries, and many of the luxuries, of life. I need not say that I was moved to pity, but, am thankful to add, to exertion in their behalf. In the district that I then resided in, there was not a gentleman's seat for many miles, and the parish was, like others in the neighbourhood, divided amongst several small proprietors, who lived in London, or other counties; and all absentees. I state this to show that almost all the responsibility fell on my own shoulders, and that I had nobody to assist me but the clergyman, who most kindly approved and aided me in my scheme, though anxious that I should carry out the working of my plan alone. It was thus:—First, I called on the farmers and land occupiers of the parish, and asked them to assist me with subscriptions to provide food for the poor; they complied with my request. They contributed according to the quantity of land they occupied. Letters were written to the owners of the property, mentioning what their tenants had given, and they responded well and handsomely to the call by proportionate donations. A soup-kitchen was then erected, and a coal and pea store obtained; and, on certain days in the week (three), these necessaries were sold at a reduced price. The charity lasted from November till March, and, in spite of the prevailing distress, the farmers had the satisfaction of feeling that their rates were less, and that the money spent had been willingly given, and not forced from their pockets by a rate. The poor also did not feel themselves lowered by accepting charity (a great object), but that they had been assisted in their distress, and were thankful. Am I

egotistical? Perhaps so: but I leave what I have written for your perusal, and trust it will prove where there is a will (so long as the motive is right) there is a way. In evidence of this fact, I will mention, I was eighteen years old, and my allowance at my private tutor's 50*l.* per annum. But, you will ask, what set me at work? First, an idea constantly running in my mind, how does steam power, applied to manufactures, or even locomotion, affect the demand for labour? Another—Is emigration beneficial? Why are our gaols so comfortable—workhouses disagreeable? What result arises from committees and commissions on education, sanitary reform, &c.? How does the poor-law work? Do existing societies eradicate much evil? The effect of the Exhibition, &c. &c. This is a bit of political economy, is it not? Yes. Is that theoretical or practical? Again, half my acquaintances who read this may say, 'Poor fellow! he intends to reform the world—wants to be an orator, a politician. Why not shoot, hunt, as we do, and enjoy himself? He thinks he is going to set the world to rights.' Questions arising from ideas of what acquaintances say:—First: Why are questions of interest pooh poohed! by young men? Why is it weakness to have an interest in anything? What are the duties of property? do we perform them? Do young men of family exert themselves in any way? These sort of ideas, my dear A., come into my head when reading newspapers, or a book, or occur in conversation. Do they never occur to you? I think we owe a great deal to Messrs. Thackeray, Dickens, Douglas Jerrold, Mayhew, and others, who, in their works, have taught us to call things by their right names—who are not ashamed of showing us our inconsistencies, and in their pleasant style inducing us to laugh at them and be ashamed of them.

But to proceed; I have always been ambitious to arrive at some end, to come to some conclusion or result—and being in London for some time, I was determined to see for myself what miseries existed, and what could be done to relieve them in some way or other. One of my first steps was to obtain the assistance of some of the clergy in London,

to whose great kindness I owe the knowledge I am endeavouring to communicate to you. With them I saw many of the working classes, sometimes inviting them to meet me; at other times going to them in their houses. My visits, however, amongst them will afford ample matter for another letter; so, for the present I will conclude, and hoping that you are not fatigued, believe me,

My dear fellow,

Sincerely yours,

INGESTRE.

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## LETTER II.

MY DEAR \* \* \*

I have seen so many different people, and their ways of living, in London, that I hardly know how to describe them to you, or where to begin. It was perfectly wonderful to me where the great mass of the people come from. My mind, however, was soon set at rest on this point, when one day I migrated from Regent-street, and went through Golden-square, to some of the streets in that neighbourhood. The part of the parish I am speaking of, I believe not to be so crowded as many others; but there are badly ventilated dwellings, and broken down staircases, and families crowded together as if they were ants. You must bear in mind also, that the people who inhabit these houses are not at all of the lowest orders, they are chiefly mechanics, and they tell me that the small amount they receive for their labour causes them to submit to the oppression of the middle classes, and they have no means of resisting it. The common decencies of life are forgotten in many of the houses they inhabit. Now, perhaps what I have just said may explain to you why I am so anxious to establish societies to ameliorate their condition. Unfortunately for the west end of the town (for I do not know much of other localities), the great owners of property have no power over their possession; the houses are let on long leases, and the mass of them do not fall in for many years. The richer portion of society, however



sympathizing and charitably disposed (I mean pecuniarily), are inclined to take for granted that a remedy is impossible, and acquiescence in the present state of things inevitable. I would fain see a greater spirit of energy, a wish to know the condition of one's own property, and not to take everything upon hearsay. However good a man's agent may be, I would like to see people inquire into the condition of their properties themselves. If this were so, how much more good would be done at half the expense by the rich—and even by those who do not rejoice in large means—visiting the working classes, being willing and ready to assist them, with time, with sympathy; to help to obtain for them education, which they pine for, would do much, and at the same time those who were rightly intentioned would supplant those who at present obtain a livelihood by pretending to be sympathizers with their wants, and are, in fact, really their oppressors. Do not think, my dear fellow, that I have turned Chartist, Socialist, Communist, or anything of that sort. We have only to look at poor France, where they have attempted *Egalité, Fraternité, Liberté*. I wonder how long that would last here—I doubt a day. No, but what I do feel, and most strongly, is, that till lately the aristocracy and gentry of the country have rather lived on their estates as privileged idlers, than as men performing duties which their best talents and largest exertions were not too much for. That they have gone on receiving the proceeds, either from their landed, or house properties, and have not sufficiently considered the claims others had on them from the mere fact of possession, and it occurs to me that they have been, and still are, losers by their apathy. Just for instance look at the rates levied for the punishment of crime, and consider the vast extent and increasing establishments raised throughout the country for the punishment, not the prevention of it. A prosecution for poaching costs a county 7*l.* 10*s.*, or somewhere thereabouts; perhaps if part of that money had been spent in education, in giving a man a sense of right and wrong, much expense would have been saved, and perhaps a human being—and this by the slightest exertion on the part of the owner of the property. A poacher is a bad instance for me to select, but

I have qualm of conscience on this subject, though I know in many neighbourhoods they seldom poach from want.

Again, to carry out my theory, if people, instead of subscribing their 100*l.* and 1000*l.* to this and to that charity (though, God knows, I would not prevent them doing so), would just inquire a little amongst the working classes and the poor, and would be ready to be the champion of the oppressed, do not you think it would be for the better? For my part, I am much happier since I have attempted to do a little in this line; and I doubt whether (but of that you must judge) I am much contaminated by my visiting what our class used to call the lower orders.

I have given you a long lecture on what I consider our duties, but I know not whether I am not spending my time better than writing description upon description of wretched dwellings. If you want to know more about them, read Mr. Mayhew's *London Labour and the London Poor*; it will give you a great insight into these matters, but, to enter into what he describes, you must come and see for yourself. The middleman system is the great curse which oppresses working men. By middleman, I mean the person who comes between the owner of a property and the occupier, and there are often two or three links between him who pays and him who pockets the original rent. I have found out an instance (I am sorry to say, by no means a rare one) of a man making a clear 100*l.* a year (after he had paid his rent, about 40*l.*) by the pence (3*d.*) he took for nightly lodging. He crowded the rooms to such an extent, that the lodgers were literally swarming so thick on the ground that I could not move without stepping on some one; and all this, my dear fellow, is to be obviated by a little exertion, and, what is more, without loss of rent. Do not suppose me to mean that nobody thinks of these things, and nobody tries to obviate them. There are many societies instituted to remedy these and almost every other evil. But still there is room enough and to spare for more such efforts. If individuals would go and see for themselves, many opportunities would arise to call forth individual charity (and, by charity, I do not mean the gift of money),

for I fear that we are too apt to say, 'There is something for you; do not bother me again.' But sympathy is needed; an appreciation of the feelings of the classes beneath us, and, consequently, an anxiety to befriend them. There are many of the working classes who will not take money; give them but employment, and they are grateful. I do not mean to say that government, or the country, is bound to find work for every one, but this I will say, that this is a subject that wants very close inquiry, and that time alone will settle this important question. Committees of the House may sit for years, as

Thick as leaves in Vallambrosa;

but till men will inquire more, we shall not have much done. What I say again is, it is not our money, it is our inquiry into this and other matters concerning their interests, that the working classes want.

I will give you an instance of what I mean. One day I went to see a poor man who was ill; his son accompanied me back to the main street, for I did not know my way back. He was grateful for my visit to the father. I had left my cab standing in Regent-street; when he saw it, he said, 'Where did you get that harness from?' It was new. I told him such and such a shop. He then said, 'You have paid, or intend to pay for it?' I replied, of course. 'Yes,' said he, 'but you do not care the least whether we are paid fairly for it or not; you have not inquired; not that we complain so much of the wages (though that is bad enough), but we do find fault with you for the oppression we suffer at the hands of Moses, Nicol (who was nearly pulled to pieces for his pains), and others. That 'Song of the Shirt' was the only thing that ever you did for us.'

But I must postpone the rest for another letter.

Sincerely yours,

INGESTRE.

## LETTER III.

MY DEAR \* \* \* \*

Now for an attempt to describe to you what I have seen. I talked to you before of the wretched habitations in St. James's; they are bad enough, but they are as a mere nothing to St. Giles's, and some places on the other side of the Thames. I went at night, and saw them in their full misery. The first place I went into was in Church-lane, a place so filthy that the stench is perfectly overpowering in the street itself; how much more so you can imagine on entering a small room, with about twenty-five or thirty people in it, most of them naked, and strangers to one another; many of them lying on the damp ground, or on perhaps a bit of straw (a great luxury); squalid, naked children, crying for food, and men reeling about drunk, and women in the same state of beastly intoxication. I literally saw, in many of these places, the vermin crawling about in myriads. Next door, I went into a place where there was a fire, round which a number of dirty boys were sitting, all of them, I was told, young thieves. This place, too, was crowded, and the dirt and filth equal to the other. I never could have believed such misery could have existed unless I had seen it. (Near this place, too, are all the lowest places for wretched abandoned women; people I should scarcely have known to belong to the fairer sex, unless I had distinguished them by their bonnet or dress.) In one house, near to a model lodging-house, I was shown a coffin; the lid was off, and I could plainly discern the body. The coffin was placed in the window-sill, and I was told that twenty people had slept for more than a week in the same room—a little bit of a place—waiting for time and a little money to have a wake. In the locality that I am speaking of, the people were chiefly Irish. As to an idea that the Deity existed, there did not seem the slightest symptom of it; indeed, they were really more like beasts than human creatures.

I should think in that one evening, in that very locality, I saw 300 people at least. The model lodging-house opposite for single men charged the same prices for accommodation, a separate bed, bath, &c., as they paid to be in these wretched holes.

The model lodging-house I speak of, near Church-lane, was for single men ; there was one for families the other side of New Oxford-street, and the charges for living there were at a moderate rate. In the wretched houses surrounding them they charged nearly the same, and, considering the superior accommodation provided in the model houses, I should say the rent was less in proportion. These poor creatures pay, for sleeping in the beastly holes I mention, *4d.*, *3d.* and *2d.* a night. The real owner of the property perhaps receives *30l.* for an eight-room house; the tenant perhaps lets each room to different lodgers for *10l.* a piece. The poor creatures, perhaps twenty or thirty in one room, pay *3d.*, more or less, a piece ; they pay the money before they sleep. Just look at the enormous profits realized by this system. There is no greater cruelty than improving streets without providing accommodation for the people ejected from the houses pulled down. Church-lane is more crowded than ever since New Oxford-street was made. You see the real owner of the property does not gain more than he ought ; it is the wretched man that is between him and the occupier that makes the profit. You may say model lodging-houses do not answer. That fact I partially deny. For instance, where they have failed, it has been from these causes :—

1st. That a working man will not live far from his work. He would rather submit to any inconvenience than that.

2ndly. They rather dislike the restraint that is enforced, and object to living in what they call an institution. Societies have rather treated the working classes as children, and that they will not submit to. Even the societies and houses that have not succeeded, have done an incalculable deal of good, even when they have not obtained lodgers, and in this way I have seen houses, in the neighbourhood of improved dwellings, which people would not live in until improvements

were made, equivalent to those to be found in model lodging-houses. Houses were improved by the mere fact of contiguity to model lodgings. A working man as well as a nobleman or gentleman, so long as he pays rent, will have his home his castle; and objects to any restraint enforced. It is not that he wants to be out at night, but he will not allow the key to be turned upon him.

The lodging-houses are so similar, that what I have described to you will give you an idea of all.

A few words as to amusements and recreation of the people. In London, after visiting lodging-houses, we went to places of entertainment, and low dancing saloons; in one, where I entered, a man was pointed out, respectably dressed; he was *dancing*. I was told, that he gained his livelihood by drawing pictures of a ship, a steam engine, on the pavement; that this he sold to a beggar for a shilling for the day, who sat by it and begged. This man drew often fourteen or seventeen of these pictures in various localities, in early morning, before people were about, and thus made his livelihood. Near him was a swell-mobman. You might have taken him for a gentleman, he was so well-dressed. It is very curious to observe the number of different grades amongst thieves; a man who would steal a watch, would not speak to a pocket-handkerchief thief. I must again refer you to Mr. Mayhew; he will tell you everything in his book on this subject.

Another place we went in was a large room, tidily painted with nautical subjects. At the end of the room was a small stage, at the back of which was a scene adapted to the songs sung; for instance, H. Russell's song, 'The Maniac,' was sung in front of a dungeon. This was the best place of entertainment I went in; and though there were there people of bad character, both men and women, order was very well maintained.

Different classes in London have different places of resort; for instance, there are places where foreigners only go. German bands, that play very well, are employed in these places. Sailors, again, have their houses of resort. These poor fellows are more plundered than any other class. On

the other hand, mechanics, shoemakers, tailors, are fond of institutes, and intellectual amusements. I attended a meeting where there was a lecture on history, and I freely confess, I was put to the blush, by the intimate knowledge the lecturer displayed with his subject. The fault I found was, that he drew unfair inferences. The subject was Roman History. He treated all the early part as purely fabulous. For instance, Romulus and Remus, a pretty tale—he did not attempt to separate fiction from fact. Numa Pompilius, as a good monarch, was entirely slurred over. He growled much at the Patrician order; any instance in their favour, of course fabulous, whilst he lauded the Plebs to the utmost of his power.

The Tarquins were dwelt upon at unnecessary length as tyrants (as, no doubt, they were), but, as suiting his subject, he harped on them. The fair influence of the history was not allowed. He also took opportunities of slurring at the veracity of the Scriptures, treating many points as fabulous. After a song, accompanied by an organ, and sung by thirty or forty people, very well indeed, the lecturer touched upon what he called the topics of the day. He talked much of the progress of Chartism in large manufacturing towns, of the right of every one to possess equally. Not so much did he say this, as that he intended it to be inferred. He abused a nobleman (and most justly) for saying that he thought the working classes had no right to the best of things; that they had the best of bread and strongest beer; but it was not necessary for them. He extolled a patriot by name, who, when this sentiment was uttered, got up and cursed this nobleman, whose name, by-the-by, the lecturer suppressed. The inference he tried to obtain was this; a nobleman said, the working classes live too well. He was an oppressor, and, consequently, all aristocrats are oppressors: therefore, all aristocrats are to be cursed. Instead of holding out the individual to blame (as he was justified in doing), he abused the whole class as aristocrats, and assumed them necessarily to be of the same opinion. His audience, however, drew the fair logical

inference, and the lecturer was hissed for attempting to be unfair. The working classes have no objection to the aristocracy and gentry individually, but think that they possess too much wealth by hereditary right. They ask for a standard of intellect; they think that money is ground from them by the middleman and tradesmen, who, they say, ill use them or neglect them. They cannot understand why money (made, as in many cases they can prove, unfairly) is to be the qualification for a vote. This is what they mean by clamouring for universal suffrage. Their terms, I fancy, suggest much more than they really mean. If you talk to them separately, you will find this. 'Do you wish,' I have asked, 'for equal division of property?' 'No,' is the answer I receive. 'Why?' 'It would not last a day.' 'What do you want?' 'Fair remuneration for our labour,' is the reply; 'that the middleman should not make too much. For instance, we get six shillings for the work of a pair of wellington boots: you pay two guineas. The tradesmen make too much profit.' Rent, bad debts, credit given, were urged in favour of the tradesman. All admitted. In spite of all this, in most trades, they say, the tradesman profits too much; and I own, from what experience I have (though short it may be), I am inclined to believe this statement. But yet their complaint is (and I will try and state it in their own words), 'You, who have leisure, do not find out these things; or, if you do, you either bear with it, or use it for political influence.'

At Manchester, the low places of entertainment are of a similar kind; so that I need not repeat what I have seen about them, as the same statements will equally apply to both places. Of course, there are different causes which create distress; for instance, at Manchester, want of employment, in consequence of factories working half time; at Liverpool, the immense quantity of Irish, and nothing to do in the docks. However, there are so many local reports, that you can easily get them, and they will inform you far better than I can. My sole object in writing to you is, to create a curiosity in your mind on these subjects. The rest will work itself.



I have now talked enough for one letter, but I have much more to say ; but I will endeavour to give it you in small quantities, so that the dose shall not be too much for you. For the present, believe me,

Sincerely yours,

INGESTRE.

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#### LETTER IV.

MY DEAR \* \* \* \*

In looking over what I have written, the cause of the working classes seems to have suffered in my hands. I fear I have been a bad advocate, and have written coldly and tamely on that which, if the simple truth were stated, ought to be eloquent ; but if I have failed, my best argument is still untouched, and I can at least say, come and see for yourself. Wherever you are, at all events do your best to get information on these subjects, even if you are staying at home (where these duties more particularly belong), inquire and know how your labourers live ; see how best you can befriend them, and leave not all charity to be done by the clergyman, or perhaps the bailiff, or even worse, by cheque (of course I mean by cheque *solely* without sympathy, for in this venal world we can do little without the needful) ; know whether they belong to benefit societies, and, if they do not, see if you can start them. In fact, encourage them in every way to be provident. Perhaps you may reply, 'This is all very well with you, but our property is greatly in debt, and has so many claims on it, that when everything is paid there are no means left.' Well and good : supposing that to be the case, it is still your duty to know about all these things. If you cannot befriend largely with your purse, you can by your sympathy, by devoting a portion of your leisure to seeing where the evil really exists. If people would do this a little more, and compare notes occasionally, we should know much more on this subject, and where the shoe really pinched. Why is it that generally throughout England a son is kept in complete ignorance respecting his

father's tenantry and labourers till he succeeds to the property? If he is asked of the working of any system (it matters not what) in his neighbourhood he knows nothing of it. It is laughable, if it be not much worse, to conceive a man to arrive at all this sort of information by instinct at a certain age, or at a certain day; but we act as if such were the case. I am talking at you now individually, as having a title, and being heir to a property; but I fancy these remarks apply as well to others, even to any one, from the highest to the middle, and even lower classes. We are all of us in a degree better off than some of our neighbours; for instance, the man who earns 18s. a week is better off than one who earns less. Let his feeling be gratitude for all the blessings he enjoys, and secondly, let him turn his mind to inquire how he can improve the condition of his neighbour. Even if he does not do this from the best of motives, let him remember he is at the same time benefiting himself—there is no argument so tangible as this. Again, one step higher: is it not the rule generally where there is a large property that the owner is rather expected to do all these good works single-handed? Certainly, it is so where I have been. For my part I should like to see all classes of society bearing their share. If the landlord gives so much, let the tenant take his share; if the head of the firm does so much, let those who are under him take their part. I would have all these things arranged by a sort of mutual understanding. Our taxes are levied on this principle; why should not this be a voluntary tax, imposed by a sense of duty.

Mind, I do not say that the middle classes are unwilling to take their share in good works; for I have no doubt that many do great kindnesses to their poorer neighbours in every way. But one of the great evils in England is, the way one class holds itself aloof from another; and I believe this to be the cause not only of the minor evil I have attempted to describe, but of half our social evils. This feeling of standing aloof has put weapons into the hands of political agitators, pseudo-philanthropists. Freehold land societies, 'how much to be execrated many can tell you,'

and more particularly those accursed 'loan societies,' where as much as 7*l.* 10*s.* has been given for the immediate use of five pounds, to be repaid by weekly instalments of a shilling—all of these spring from this evil.

These are the evils that require investigation. I admit, I, as a young man, may form many unjust, and even erroneous opinions, and so may you; but I say this, it is high time that we knew some little about such subjects; we may make mistakes, but these experience will correct; we must not wait till we are older, or marry and settle, or get into parliament.

I am not a disciple of Young England, for we are too young to be leaders in a great movement. I am not only tired, but ashamed of presuming on the advantages I enjoy. I say, that every position in life has its duties, and the sooner we find them out, and act up to them, the better. I tell you, the march of education is so rapid, 'the toe of the peasant gibes the heel of the courtier' so much, that if we do not our best to keep up with it, we shall just quietly (and I even doubt that) be left in the lurch. I can imagine men I know at the clubs, in the park, at Oxford, Melton Mowbray, good fellows at heart, all seeking for pleasure more or less, and many of them *blasé*, pitying me for these opinions. I do not wish to abolish all these luxuries, but I would have them used in moderation. It has been remarked, that directly a state becomes too prosperous, she gets luxurious, effeminate, and decays. We can trace this in all history; the dear old Athenian and Spartan instances for me suffice; only mind, let us have a modified Sparta, for instance, port wine instead of black broth.

In another letter, I will attempt to sketch for you many of the evils that exist; and also make some suggestions for remedies which I have heard. At all events, if they are not infallible, which is likely enough, they will induce others to come forward with better plans, so in the end it will be for good. Now good-by.

Sincerely yours,

INGESTRE.

## LETTER V.

MY DEAR \* \* \* \*

I forward you a correspondence I had respecting the objects of the society in which you know I am interested. I will leave you to judge which party is right. At all events it will show you that the middleman is one of the greatest evils of the day, for he is a wasp, that really does no work, but purloins honey from the industrious bee. I will first state the objects of the society, and then the correspondence shall follow :—

## OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY.

1. To improve existing dwellings in densely-populated districts.

2. To destroy the system of subletting, by which both the real owner and the tenant suffer, the latter most severely, by the exactions of the middleman.

3. To enable the tenant, by small weekly payments, to have the use of, and ultimately to become the possessor of, furniture, at a cheap rate.

4. To alter the system of nightly lodgings, by which at present the middleman derives the sole profit. This society to be self-supporting.

5. The society, whilst carrying out these objects, desires to show, by periodical statements of its expenditure and receipts, that it offers as safe an investment as those companies whose avowed object is return for capital; so that, by its system of collecting rents and management, landlords would improve their properties without risk.

## CORRESPONDENCE ON SUBJECT.

MY DEAR INGESTRE,

I have had a great deal of talk with regard to your scheme, with some friends and with several London proprietors, and they, as well as others to whom I have mentioned it, agree that in its present form it will be utterly impracticable, though at the same time they highly approve of the motive. They say that it would be per-

fectly impossible for a landlord to get his rent for these back streets, in which middlemen so particularly flourish, without their intervention, as the extreme poor will come for a week or fortnight, and would then abscond without paying rent, and it would of course be absurd to set an agent to hunt up a lot of poor devils, and prosecute them for a few shillings.

As to the objects of the society, I will tell you, in order, what I think of them. The first is, of course, most highly to be applauded, and is what I am sure every proprietor should be most desirous of doing; but the difficulty is to know how to set about it. I must say I think your scheme, in its present form, would not overcome that difficulty. No. 2, I do not agree with; as it is better for the proprietor to be satisfied with what he gets now from the middlemen than to get nothing from the lowest class of lodgers, which would most probably be the case. I cannot see that the real owner is a *sufferer* by the present arrangement. No. 3, I do not understand, but no doubt you can explain it to me. No. 4, I should be very glad to see carried out, if you could show me how it is to be done *without* doing away with the *middleman*. As to No. 5, I think you have made a mistake in holding up a society instituted for charitable purposes in the light of an investment.

I do not think you will easily persuade landlords that your system of collecting rents will be better than the present method.

[The letter here digresses to other subjects, and is not quoted.]

#### REPLY 1.

I will now answer the objections against the society, that you showed me.

Mr. ——— says, in reference to object No. 2, ‘I do not agree to it, as it is better for the proprietor to be satisfied with what he gets now from the middleman than to get nothing from the lowest class of lodgers.’

*Answer.*—The middleman is paid for his trouble wholly at the expense of the tenant; if he can collect rents, so could the landlord’s manager, at a diminished cost, which, even

if put on in the shape of rent, would not bring it up to the present sum paid by the tenant. There are no middlemen in the country. I know a gentleman who has several small tenements, and he assured me no men paid their rents so well. Hence it is not impossible to get your rent except by means of middlemen.

No. 3. Furniture.—The poor pay exorbitantly for *furnished* lodgings, because they have no ready money to buy furniture with. No. 3 obviates this.

No. 4. Nightly lodgings. This might at once be done by requiring payment at the door.

No. 5. This is not strictly a charitable society. The rents of the houses altered or erected will pay us (instance given) five per cent. upon the money expended, besides a sum put by for repairs, &c. The rent will form a nucleus of a fund to extend the system. If the money were raised as in public companies, greater profits would be required to justify it is a speculation. The members of the society must take all risk, and for the present limit their operations, which I have no doubt may be hereafter indefinitely extended. Your friend says, ‘It would of course be absurd to send an agent to hunt up a lot of poor devils, and bully them for a few shillings.’ He means to say it would not do to read in the paper, Mr. Snooks or Tibbs, debtor to his Grace the Duke of —, 3s. per week rent, and 1s. for use of crockery. To me it seems infinitely more derogatory to make men pay large sums for the collection of rent in addition to the rent itself. The present system makes, as you are aware, thieves and prostitutes. The real gainers are the three or four men who intervene between landlord and tenant. An incredible amount of evil is the admitted result. Who ought to remedy it? The landlords. Have they done so? No! Let them come forward with a remedy, and then it will be time enough to abuse our plan. Privileges imply duties; rent is a privilege, at least it is a very solid, tangible, convertible substance. If Mr. — will come round and visit the working classes with you and our friend C—, he will see enough to convince him he is wrong.

Believe me, sincerely yours,

X.

## REPLY 2.

MY DEAR \* \* \* \*

I will take the objects of the society as you have done. No. 1 we agree upon. No. 2 you disapprove of as being impossible. As the case now stands, often the real owner only gets 30*l.* or 40*l.* for his house, whilst the middleman makes, perhaps, a profit of 50*l.* or 60*l.* a-year, by charging exorbitantly for rooms singly, and crowding families in them. I will undertake to show you several instances of this on the properties of the great proprietors in London. In different parishes the rent varies. In St. James's, Westminster, a single room fetches often 5*s.* a-week, whilst in Marylebone only 2*s.* to 3*s.*; so much depends upon neighbourhood. Of course, however, the rent paid by the middleman is proportionate, though the extortion on his part is the same. You say it would be useless to prosecute poor devils for 2*s.* or 3*s.* rent—I agree with you. It has been proved that where they have extra comforts, such as three rooms instead of one, the rent is paid very fairly. There is no difficulty in collecting it. You have only to employ respectable people in some position of life, as a beadle or parish-clerk, or else have some one resident in the house, and take it nightly or weekly. I can prove the system answers in York, in Leeds, and some places in London. Where the plan has failed, I can often account for it. You seem to forget property has its duties as well as its privileges. The great difficulty, I expect, is when property is mortgaged, and the owner has not means to make improvements: but when societies offer to do this for him, the difficulty vanishes. There is no doubt as to the system proposed being remunerative. The house at Leeds paid ten per cent., I believe, the first half-year of its existence.

No. 3.—Answer. At present the poor either pay exorbitantly for the use of furnished lodgings, or, if they have furniture of their own (still paying a high rent for unfurnished lodgings), the middleman gives them credit for 2*l.* rent, supposing the furniture is worth 3*l.*, and then sues for rent. We think we can, by our system, give two rooms at least

instead of one. Something to be charged weekly, besides the rent, for use of furniture, till it is paid for, and becomes their own, and all at a less charge than is now paid for present rent and discomfort.

No. 4. You say the middleman is a necessity. In answer to this I will show how great an evil he is. I can prove that one of these worthies rented a house for 40*l.*, and made a clear 100*l.* a-year by it. This is by no means a solitary instance. They have greater facility for extortion by being paid at night before the lodgers sleep. Why, would not people rather pay 2*d.* or 3*d.* for a clean bed than the same for lying on the floor—as they do now?

No. 5. The society wishes to show by its accounts that the system pays, and consequently only asks for a certain sum to prove their principle is right. You say we shall have great difficulty in convincing landlords on our plan. I agree with you, landlords are at present content with what they get through their agents; they are afraid of the expense if they begin to repair their properties, though, I have no doubt, the profits would justify the outlay. (The question of the duties of property you have left out entirely.) What the society is anxious to prove is, that its principles are right, and with the profits it makes it would extend the system. It also hopes that its example would induce landlords to try their plan, and that other parties would invest their money. We believe that many people who would not, or could not give largely, would invest their money, so as it paid five per cent., from the feeling that they would be doing good, and at the same time not out of pocket. I think I have touched on all points in your letter, so

Believe me, yours sincerely.

This is one of the great evils we have to fight against. I will touch upon a few others in my next, as this letter has by far exceeded the usual length. I think the correspondence quoted will let you into the system we advocate.

Good-by,

Sincerely yours.



## LETTER VI.

MY DEAR \* \* \*

I promised in my last epistle to endeavour to touch upon what, in my opinion, are the evils of the day. I do not know how I dare do so, for being a young man there is a probability of committing myself, and if I make a mistake it will be there to be quoted against me. However, at first, I will endeavour to talk about those evils that are generally permitted to exist, and by these means I hope I shall make fewer errors. I do not know that I am not a little republican in my ideas—I am sure I am against universal suffrage; but I would willingly see some other than the present criterion of voting. I admit it is a question far beyond me; but that money should be the qualification is to me horrid. It makes my blood boil, when I am obliged to resort to others for general information. Look how often at the House of Lords, or House of Commons, one can see lawyers, builders, &c., waiting to prime an honourable member on the subject. Of course a man must have local information and legal advice—I am not arguing against this, but what I am arguing against is, that a man ought to be ashamed to rely upon others for information in the case where he is perfectly competent to obtain it for himself. I know there are many long-winded gentlemen in the house, and I would not advocate for a moment a man standing up to talk about everything; but I should, if I was a member, wish not only to know, but to have the capability and willingness, when necessary, to speak upon, the general topics of the day, without being crammed for the occasion. I am all for the influence property has naturally, but I should wish to see it used fairly.

What I complain of is, so many are legislators who know little or nothing. For instance, take social evils. How much is spent in punishment of crime? I saw a sketch the other day of a plan for penal reformatory schools: it appears to me to be admirable. I copied the heads of the plan, which I give you, but have not the circular. It says:—

‘ The children who require notice are—

‘ 1. Those who have not yet subjected themselves to the grasp of the law, but who, by reason of vice, neglect, or extreme poverty of their parents, are inadmissible to existing school establishments, and consequently must grow up without education, almost inevitably forming part of the perishing and dangerous classes, and ultimately becoming criminal.

‘ 2. Those who are already subjecting themselves to police interference, by vagrancy, mendicancy, or petty infringement of the law.

‘ 3. Those convicted of felony, or such misdemeanour as involves dishonesty.’

For these classes, the remedies are—

‘ 1. Free day-schools.

‘ 2. Industrial feeding-schools, with compulsory attendance.

‘ 3. Penal reformatory schools.’

The principle of this suggestion is this, that society has a right to protect itself from depredation, nuisances, &c., from these children; that prevention is better than cure; and that, as the fact of being a parent necessarily involves a responsibility, it would be a great relief if magistrates had a power to commit children to one of these three classes of schools, instead of sending to gaol, which act is in itself derogatory, and often baneful. The schoolmaster, it is suggested, should have the power of retaining a child if he did not attempt to amend.

This is only a rough idea of a plan, but it must surely be worked out. Look how much better prevention is than cure, and look how sick people are of rates. I give you an instance of success on this principle. Surely cleverer heads than mine can work out something. The great difficulty of this plan is, what religious education is to be given. My first impulse is, let there be a numerical standard alone—a hundred souls, dissenters, consequently a government grant; a hundred churchmen, ditto a grant; a hundred anything, let there be a grant; a hundred Roman Catholics (I only take a hundred as my number *ex. gra.*)—but there I

stop. Is it right to promulgate error? Was not the grant to Maynooth wrong? I will not, however, digress on this subject; but anything is better than what we are now doing. Sums upon sums are spent on punishment of crime, police forces, &c. I only ask for something to teach the principle of right and wrong, and that there is a Deity, and gratitude due to Him; the rest will follow.

I am not going to talk Whig or Tory, Protectionist or Free Trader; but does it not seem to you that our legislative movements have been of late a matter of political expediency, not a sense of what is right or wrong? I would fain see a stronger religious influence, an anxiety (though I am for dignity of the State, &c.) to get rid of abuses, sinecures, &c.

Another point—the great bane of this country—the standing aloof of one class from another, of religious dissents, the squabbles, namely, between high Church and low Church. For my part, I have too much to do to look after my own sins to waste time in quarrelling about the Rubric; and, oh! if men would unite—why, often when they do, their differences are nothing; they can all be compressed into a nutshell. Look even as regards charitable objects, how men of every sort of opinion have united together irrespective of party feeling. It is a great step in the right direction. Another subject, but it is tender ground—and I know not how I should like it myself, for it would require self-denial—the example the upper classes set, and how much depends upon it. Is it fair to have a public-house shut most rigidly, and to have a club open all day? Is it fair legally to stop all gaming, and yet have a turf club? Many men, I know, can afford it (or rather are said to do so), but look how many are ruined, and good fellows too, solely by wishing to do what is *à la mode*. Why not seek for a notoriety for good, rather than one for evil? Why do the higher classes admit some vices as fashionable, and consequently pardonable?—and now I am not speaking of profligacy or vice, but even of a common thing—the waste of time, the seeking for pleasure. I, for my part, love Old England. I am proud of the pri-

vileges I enjoy; and I feel strongly that, if an exertion is not made, and one in the right direction, with a religious basis, we may soon arrive at the same state as our revolutionary neighbour. I have had great advantages, and I trust I am thankful for them; but does it never occur to you death may come upon us and take us unawares. My dear fellow, just look at this fact in the face. You must exert yourself. I know you may say to me, that I am inconsistent in conversation, in habits, in every action; and you may, perhaps, prove me to be worse. I admit all these charges you may bring against me; but I ask you, as one whose friendship I value, to believe me when I say that I humbly trust I am better than I was; that since I have been occupied I care less for idle pursuits, and that, perhaps, the very fact of not being ashamed of these very opinions I am now uttering is something in my favour. I know I am ambitious; I know the very credit I have got, and often undeservedly get, is most pleasing to me; but still I believe the more I involve myself in these matters the more I am ashamed to do wrong. These are my opinions; and, though I am inconsistent, these are my colours, and to them I pin my faith. You ask me how to begin. The subject of lodging-houses may not interest you, but I give you this for your encouragement—just seek and you will find; try to do good, opportunities will arise. One little fact: whenever I have been ambitious, and done anything for affectation's sake, I have failed; whenever my motive has been good purely, I have always succeeded. I know I run the risk of censure in these letters, but, as they are, so they must remain. The motive is sincere that induces me to write them; and though I think I may among some be thought enthusiastic, crotchety by others, so inconsistent again that I am not to be believed, I send them to you, thankful if I shall induce one of my old friends to come and join me in what I *really* care most about.

Believe me, sincerely yours,

INGESTRE.

## ON MODEL LODGING HOUSES.

BY W. BECKETT DENISON.

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THE common saying that 'Cleanliness is next to Godliness,' is not, indeed, as many people suppose, in the Bible; it is not even a genuine proverb at all, but merely a corruption of another saying, which it has rather unfairly driven into oblivion, viz., that cleanliness is next to *goodliness*, *i. e.*, comeliness or beauty. I have heard some persons express something like regret, when they have found that what they think so good a proverb could not boast of such good authority as they supposed. But they may well spare their regret. Cleanliness may truly enough be called next to goodliness; but to say that it is next to godliness would be most unlike both the wisdom and the language of Scripture, inasmuch as it would imply that there is something which deserves commendation, though it falls short of the only thing which the word of God does or can commend; and would, in fact, be degrading both cleanliness and godliness by representing them as different degrees of virtue: whereas, in fact, all through the Bible, cleanliness of body is used as the very symbol and synonym for cleanliness and purity of heart; and in like manner filthiness, uncleanness, and sin are used almost as identical terms.

Thus we see, that although this popular corruption of a good proverb is really nothing better than a vapid and shallow sentiment, void of all authority, and hardly containing any real meaning, yet we have, as usual, the best of all authority for the real truth, which is supposed to be expressed and contained in the saying in question, viz., that there is an actual and permanent connexion between cleanliness and godliness, filthiness and vice.

Of course, no one can indulge in the folly of supposing that mere cleanliness of body is a substitute for, or even necessarily leads to cleanliness of mind. There is no such royal road to heaven as that: no virtue is a substitute for any other. All that we are concerned with at present is the fact, that the wisdom which cannot err long ago anticipated what these times have, perhaps, first discovered and announced as a matter of painful observation and experience, that filthy habits of life are never far separated from that moral filthiness, of which they are used throughout the Scriptures as the type and representative. And this connexion between them is unfortunately not less true where the filthiness of men's abodes and habits of life is hardly to be called their own fault, than where it is their own fault. Indeed, the latter is so comparatively rare, that when it does occur we may say (in a somewhat different sense from the original one) not only that such a man hath no pre-eminence over a beast, but that the beasts have pre-eminence over him; for it is well known that even the instinct of most of the beasts leads them to prefer cleanliness to dirt when we give them the opportunity to make the choice. And now-a-days no small pains are taken that even beasts shall enjoy that advantage. Even for the low and merely physical ends of their existence, it is found worth while to attend to the light, and air, and warmth, and cleanliness of their dwellings. On some of them a few rich men now expend more care than, till a few years ago, was expended by the State and by all the rich men of England in attending to the same objects in the dwellings of the millions—not of horses who are to run races, or of beasts who are to get prizes at a show, but of men, and women, and children, who have indeed a race to run, but for themselves, and not for their masters, and who have a prize to get, or lose, for ever.

But these days of neglect and of selfishness, the most short-sighted and unprofitable, even in a worldly point of view, are, it is to be hoped, passing away. And it is not of much consequence that this has been brought about by force, as it were; it matters not that those who 'hold the might and control the capabilities' have been rudely awakened from

their sleep of heedlessness and unconcern by a giant voice shouting in their ears; it matters not that the instinct of self-preservation has taught them, is teaching them, at last, that it is no longer safe or politic to ignore the existence of the masses of population; it matters not how the impulse originated—the fact remains that the world at large has become conscious of the truth so long forgotten, or at least unheeded, that something is to be done for poverty and labour—that wealth has its duties as well as its privileges—that if we wish to be happy, comfortable and prosperous ourselves, we must do what we can to achieve the comfort, happiness and prosperity of our brethren—that isolated life is not meant to be the life of man or of nations and that we are to ‘live for one another, to serve one another, through one another.’ That Epicurean disregard of everything except what was to be enjoyed for the moment, and of everybody, except those whose prosperous appearance contributed to our own enjoyment, led (as has been long ago remarked) more than anything else to that greatest disruption of society which perhaps the world has seen, in the beginning of the now long series of French revolutions; and by that providential vengeance which in the long run generally overtakes national sins, fell most heavily on the classes whose self-indulgence and recklessness had provoked it. Whether we deserved a better fate here, it is not for us to measure. Probably we did, or we should not have had it. Perhaps even then He that holds the nations in His hand, preserved us for amendment, not destruction, because He saw the seeds of amendment already sown in us; saw that in a few years more, while other nations would still be running after the same deluding and empty sounds, and still pursuing the same vain and endless search after liberty and fraternity in political chimæras and revolutionary nostrums, we should be, if not yet fully discovering, yet honestly searching after that true liberty which consists in obedience to the perfect law of liberty, and beginning to recognise that true equality and fraternity of all men, *not* (as some men pretend) by nature, which makes and will always keep them most unequal in the outward circumstances of life, but in

Christ who died for them all, in order to undo and one day set straight these very inequalities of nature which must always subsist here. And so perhaps it is, that while elsewhere thrones are shaking, or while the floods are violently damming up which will one day overwhelm them all, while men's hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after the things which are coming upon the earth, we are still suffered to go on our way, peacefully endeavouring to mend our condition—not by grand and imposing schemes for universal regeneration, but by the quiet and sure process of gradual and practical improvement, and attention to the calls for assistance which we see and hear daily in our path. And thankfully may it be said that probably there never has been a time in the history of man when, on the whole, such anxiety was displayed as in our day, to alleviate the woes and anticipate the wants of our common and suffering humanity.

These may seem great swelling words to introduce an account of lodging-houses for people who are too poor to be able to live in houses of their own. But it is these same poor people in lodging-houses who constitute the large mass of the occupiers of those large towns which are, every day, acquiring more influence on the proceedings, and therefore on the destinies, of the nation to which they belong. These are the people from whom, if ever social violence and disorganization are to be apprehended, it will come. From them every approach to and attempt at such violence has come which we have witnessed; and it was quite ascertained in the last period of manufacturing disturbances, that those who joined in them were those whose previous lives and early training were the least likely to have taught them to be contented with that state of life to which God had called them.

If it be true, as has been well said, that the clergyman and the schoolmaster are the cheapest policemen, it is hardly less true, that decent and well-managed lodging-houses for the poor will save the cost of barracks for soldiers to repress their periodical outbreaks. Of course, that is the lowest view of the subject; and probably few people follow virtue rather than vice, because, on the whole, it is unquestionably



more to their advantage in this life, as well as in the next. Nor is it a more exalted view of the question to state what is now well ascertained, that good lodging-houses will actually pay their proprietors a very fair and sufficient interest on the outlay. But still these things are fit to be mentioned. The object is indisputably good in every way; and it may properly be thus recommended to those who would not otherwise attend to it as a matter of bare benevolence—just as you may urge a gambler, a drunkard, or a debauchee to forsake their vices, because they are very nearly sure to ruin themselves, and shorten their lives, though this is in truth the lowest motive by which they could be induced to amend.

If this were a new subject, we ought before this to have explained how it is that there is such need of improved lodging-houses for the poor. But it is very far from new. Everybody who reads newspapers, has read enough to make him acquainted with the fact, that in London, and for the same reasons in all large towns, the poor sleep together, whole families in a room; and not only whole families, but heaps of people, not of the same family, often not of the same sex; that, on account of the immense demand for such lodgings, there is no such thing as competition among the lodging-house keepers, except, perhaps, in the single article of price—if in that; that for all the purposes of self-protection against the mismanagement, physical—I was going to add, moral, but the mere use of the word would be a mockery in a common lodging-house—the inmates have no protection whatever, unless the state of things becomes so much worse than the usual run of such places that it is worth their while to move to another. Then, it is to be remembered, that the vices arising out of filthy habits are those which people are least likely or perhaps able to extricate themselves from. A man, and still less a woman, living and sleeping in a den with seven other spirits more wicked than himself, can hardly, without what may in popular language be called a miracle, long remain much better than his companions. The evils of promiscuous intercourse of offenders of different degrees in gaols have long been an object of solicitude, and of contrivances of various kinds, to prevent the worst from

making the rest as bad as themselves. And in gaols they are only there for a definite time, and the more moderate offenders only for a short time. But the man who finds himself in the den of thieves of a common lodging-house, is in common lodging-houses for an indefinite time. Let him be ever so disgusted with his company, as he only will be if it is a great deal worse than himself, how is he to better himself? Can he move to any place where he will be sure that the proprietor will put no bad characters into his room? Such a question answers itself. If he has a family, he is in other ways still more at the mercy of the proprietor. There is the difficulty and expense of moving them; the chance that the new landlord may be worse than the old, to whom he is probably in debt. But, perhaps he does not care to move: the company is not so very much worse than himself as to be utterly disgusting to him: and that is at once identical with saying, that he is preparing very speedily to be as bad as them.

Then—as I can give merely outlines, not details,—there are the physical evils I spoke of at first. There is the want of repair, or, to speak more properly, the ruinousness of the house, which defies all attempts at amendment on the part of a person so helpless as a lodger; the bad drainage, and bad air consequent upon it, and the frequent want of all conveniences essential not only to decency, but to health; these are, of course, utterly incurable by the tenant, and utterly disregarded by a landlord, who finds he can keep his lodgings full, without doing anything to mend them. Consequent upon all this, and upon the dearness, if not the utter want of water at hand, is the inevitable filthiness of the lodging, and its inmates; and, as I said at first, dirt is invariably found (just as many other physical circumstances affect the mind in some way which we do not always understand) to bring with it various moral evils, and especially a state of mind particularly impregnable to the influences of teaching which might, perhaps, produce good effect under other circumstances. Every one knows, that the Celtic population are equally remarkable for their helplessness, their violence, their superstition, and their filth.

This is only a sketch, of which the reader cannot fail to recognise the almost obvious correctness from the mere nature of things; and he ought to be able to fill up of himself the inevitable details and consequences. But I cannot abstain from supplying him with a single specimen of these details, from a source which leaves nothing to conjecture, because they are furnished by those who have actually seen and examined the things which they relate. And if any one wishes to make himself thoroughly acquainted with the system of these lodging-houses in all its horrors, I would beg him to read carefully the pictures drawn by a master-hand in *London Labour and London Poor*, a book lately published by Mr. Mayhew; to whom, more than to any one else, thanks are due from all, high and low, rich and poor: from the former, that he has made known to them facts, the existence of which they had but a faint notion of before; from the latter, for his kindhearted, and zealous, and practical advocacy of their long-neglected cause. The following is an account, quoted from this book, on the testimony of one who had been long resident in the various low lodging-houses in London. The system and the conduct of them is substantially the same in country towns:—

‘ I have been familiar, unfortunately for me, with low lodging-houses, both in town and country, for more than ten years. I consider that, as to the conduct of those places, it is worse in London than in the country—while in the country the character of the keeper is worse than in London, although but a small difference can be noted.

‘ The worst I am acquainted with, though I have not been in it lately, is in the neighbourhood of Drury-lane: this is the worst, both for filth, and for the character of the lodgers. In the room where I slept, which was like a barn in size, the tiles were off the roof, and as there was no ceiling, I could see the blue sky from where I lay. That may be altered now. Here I slept in what was called the single men’s room; and it was confined to men. In another part of the house was a room for married couples as it was called; but of such apartments, I can tell you more concerning other houses. For the bed with the blue sky I

paid 3*d.* If it rained there was no shelter. I have slept in a room in Brick-lane, Whitechapel, in which were fourteen beds. In the next bed to me, on the one side, was a man, his wife, and three children, and a man and his wife on the other. They were Irish people, and I believe the women were the men's wives—as the Irish women generally are. Of all the women that resort to these places, the Irish are far the best for chastity. All the beds were occupied, single men being mixed with the married couples. The question is never asked, when a man and woman go to a lodging-house, if they are man and wife. All must pay before they go to bed, or be turned into the street. These beds were made—as all the low lodging-house beds are—of the worst cotton flocks, stuffed in coarse, strong canvas. There is a pair of sheets, a blanket, and a rug. I have known the bedding to be unchanged for three months; but that is not general. The beds are an average size. Dirt is the rule with them, and cleanliness the exception. They are all infested with vermin; I never met with an exception.

‘No one is required to wash before going to bed in any of those places, (except at a very few, where a very dirty fellow would not be admitted,) unless he has been walking on a wet day without shoes or stockings, and then he must bathe his feet. The people who slept in the room I am describing were chiefly young men, almost all accompanied by young females. I have seen girls of fifteen sleep with ‘their chaps’—in some places, with youths of from sixteen to twenty. There is no objection to any boy and girl occupying a bed, even though the keeper knows they were previously strangers to each other. The accommodation for purposes of decency is very bad in some places. A pail in the middle of a room, to which both sexes may resort, is a frequent arrangement. No delicacy or decency is ever observed. The women are, I think, worse than the men. If any one, possessing a sense of shame, says a word of rebuke, he is at once assailed, by the women in particular, with the coarsest words in the language. The Irish women are as bad as the others with respect to language, but I have known them keep themselves covered in bed when the other

women were outraging modesty or decency. The Irish will sleep anywhere to save a halfpenny a night, if they have ever so much money.'

[Here he states certain gross acts common to lodging-houses, which I shall not venture to repeat.]

'It is not uncommon for a boy or man to take a girl out of the streets to these apartments. Some are the same as common brothels, women being taken in at all hours of the night. In most, however, they must stay all night as a married couple. In dressing or undressing there is no regard to decency, while disgusting blackguardism is often carried on in the conversation of the inmates. I have known decent people, those that are driven to such places from destitution, perhaps at the first time, shocked and disgusted at what they saw. I have seen a decent married pair so shocked and disgusted, that they have insisted on leaving the place, and have left it. A great number of the lodging-houses are large old buildings, which were constructed for other purposes; these houses are not so ill-ventilated, but even there, where so many sleep in one room, the air is hot and foul. In smaller rooms, say twelve feet by nine, I have seen four beds placed for single men, with no ventilation whatsoever, so that no one could remain inside in warmish weather, without every door and window open; another room in the same house, a little larger, had four double beds, with as many men and women, and perhaps with children. The Board of Health last autumn compelled the keepers of these places to whitewash the walls and ceilings, and use limewash in other places; before that, the walls and ceilings looked as if they had been blackwashed, but still you could see the bugs creeping along those black walls, which were not black enough to hide that. In some houses in the summer you can hardly place your finger on a part of the wall free from bugs. I have scraped them off by handfulls.

'Nothing can be worse to the health than these places; without ventilation, cleanliness, or decency, and with forty people's breaths, perhaps, mingling together in one foul choking steam of stench. They are the ready resort of thieves, and all bad characters, and the keepers will hide

them, if they can, from the police, or facilitate any criminal's escape. I never knew the keepers give any offender up, even where rewards were offered: if they did, they might shut up shop. These houses are but receptacles, with a few exceptions, for beggars, thieves, and prostitutes, and those *in training* for thieves and prostitutes—the exceptions are those who *must* lodge at the lowest possible cost. I consider them in every respect of the worst possible character, and think that immediate means should be adopted to improve them. Fights, and fierce fights too, are frequent in them, and I have often been afraid murder would be done.'

Another man who had moved in good society said, when asked about his resorting to a low lodging-house:—'When a man's lost caste in society, he may as well go the whole hog, bristles and all; and a low lodging-house is the entire pig.'

This is the existing state of things in the lodging-houses of the poor; or, what was the existing state of things until what are for distinction called the *model* lodging-houses, introduced a new one, of which I shall speak presently. But before I do, just pause for a moment, most virtuous reader, and ask yourself what chance you think you would have of escaping from the devil, if you were to-morrow morning, with all your preparatory virtue, and knowledge, and good resolutions, to be suddenly let down into one of these dungeons, with not the smallest prospect of ever living anywhere else, until you should have the extraordinary cleverness and good luck to make your fortune out of a shilling a day, or to raise your wages to such a sum as would enable you to get an independent lodging? And if you think *your* chance would be a very poor one, what do you think of the prospects of people who have lived here ever since they were born; whose first and only knowledge of God is, that it is the name to curse by, when that of the devil is not thought strong enough; whose first teaching has very likely been to break some of the commandments; who probably know less of truth than Pilate did, and who are in no likelihood of ever learning any better? For so long as the nation prefers the expense of transport-vessels, hulks, prisons, prosecutions, and the innumerable other appendages of crime and ignorance, to that cheaper kind of police before

spoken of, it is simply impossible for the poorest people who live in these nurseries of iniquity to be rescued from the apparently inevitable consequences of being reared there, by any external help from clergymen or anybody else. Not, indeed, that even model lodging-houses, if they become ever so common, as we hope they will, can be proposed as a substitute for education, and for religious instruction and admonition. But, though they are not a substitute, they are almost a necessary preliminary, and unquestionably a most valuable help and introduction. What is effected by them is shortly and simply this: to provide for people living there such an arrangement of beds and apartments as to secure as much decency, cleanliness, and order as if they lived in a house of their own, and had it kept in repair for them, but at a much less cost.

In the lodging-houses for single men which the present writer has established, each person has a separate bed, with a small stool and cupboard by the side, to put his clothes in and to sit upon while dressing. The sheets are changed every week, and oftener if necessary. He can make use of washing-basins, and soap, and towels, and a bath, if he pleases. In the kitchens, there are cooking apparatus and utensils, plates, dishes, pots and pans, coffee-pots, and tea-pots, which are for the use and convenience of all who choose to bring their provisions, and cook them there; and there is a sitting-room, well provided with newspapers and periodicals, and a few books; and the charge for all this is *3d.* a night only. Besides this, each person may have the use of a lock-up cupboard to keep his provisions in, on depositing *3d.*, which is returned to him on re-delivery of the key. The only condition made is, that the rules of the house, which are 'for the general comfort and good order of the establishment,' shall be observed. A superintendent and his wife live in two rooms at the entrance, whose business is of course to see that everybody pays before making use of the house, and that he conducts himself properly while there. Prayers and a chapter from the Bible are read every evening by a clergyman—to whom I cannot sufficiently express my thanks for his great kindness in undertaking this nightly task.

I promised to show—that in addition to the incalculable advantages to the poor themselves, and, therefore, to the nation—of these model lodging-houses, they are actually sufficiently profitable to those who establish them; a fact which, by the way, has this further advantage, that it enables the inmates of them to feel that they are not living on charity, but actually paying a fair and remunerative price for what they get; and it is the great advantage of all similar institutions, that they help the poor to help themselves. And, therefore, that I may not be accused of declaiming against evils, and not attempting to suggest a feasible remedy (as was a certain well-known declaimer against ‘shams,’ by *The Times* lately), I will give a short account of the cost of establishing and working a model lodging-house in Leeds.

This was set up in the course of last spring, with no small difficulty, on account of the unwillingness of the founder to ask for subscriptions in a case which admitted of the answer that it was really a sort of building *speculation*, and the inadequacy of his own means to undertake the work without assistance. However, this was got over; and the place selected for the experiment was (as it happened) in a street or alley, which had been described in the letters to the *Morning Chronicle* on the state of the poor, as the filthiest street in England. The lodging-house was *compiled* out of several other houses thrown together for the purpose.

The particulars I have collected from the various invoices; and the whole outlay made by me is rather under, but approximates as nearly as possible to, the total stated here.

#### STATEMENT OF CAPITAL EXPENDED.

##### ALTERATION OF PREMISES AND FIXTURES.

Builder's Contract for converting Four Old Houses into suitable Premises .....	£200	0	0
Plumber for Gas Apparatus, Lead for Stairs, and other Work .....	30	0	0
Extra Painting, Signboards, &c. ....	10	0	0
Ventilating Apparatus .....	20	0	0
Cooking Ditto .....	10	0	0—270 0 0
Carried forward.....	£270	0	0



	£	s.	d.
Brought forward.....	270	0	0

## BEDS.

75 Bedsteads, at 11s. each .....	£41	5	0
225 Sheets (3 for each Bed) and making.....	16	17	6
75 Counterpanes, at 2s. 6d. each .....	9	7	6
Tick, &c., for 75 Mattresses and Pillows, and making .....	13	10	0
Flocks for 75 Beds, and filling in .....	12	0	0
Blankets, 75 pairs .....	24	0	0—117 0 0

## FURNITURE, &amp;c.

75 Cupboards for Bed Heads.....	9	10	0
36 Ditto, with Locks and Keys for use of Lodgers.....	5	14	0
5 Tables .....	5	4	0
2 Large Chests for Linen .....	3	0	0
Seats and Forms .....	4	15	0
Bath, and Trellis Flooring for Bath Room...	3	10	0
Plate Racks, Shelves, Hooks, and Rails .....	2	13	0—34 6 0

## MISCELLANEOUS.

Pots and Pans, Plates, Dishes, &c. ....	9	9	0
Brushes of all sorts.....	2	0	0
Clock .....	1	13	0
Towelling, &c. ....	2	0	0
Ledgers, Account Books, and Printing .....	3	12	0—18 14 0

Total cost .....	£440	0	0
Portion of Rent, &c., accruing during the alteration of the Premises.....	10	0	0
	£450	0	0

This list comprehends all *necessary* expenses in starting such an establishment. The conceits and vagaries, however, of individual or corporate philanthropists may easily increase the outlay to twice this amount. But I will venture to give a caution here, to prevent any one falling into the very easy and common error of making such places too grand. And for this reason I would always recommend that old houses should be compiled, or modified, rather than a new one built. You cannot expect people who have been living all their lives in the filthiest houses in the filthiest streets—whose best abode, perhaps, has been a darkened cellar—whose dearest *home* (the very word is a

taunt) a reeking mass of dirt and squalor—to be attracted all at once, and seduced from their old haunts, by the imposing appearance of an Elizabethan palace. They are frightened at such a place, and the grandeur of it keeps them away.\* The inside is where the change is to be made, and that by means of thorough ventilation, perfect cleanliness, and regulations for good order and conduct. I will now show very briefly that these establishments are not only self-supporting but very remunerative; and I think it is only necessary that this should be widely known and understood to induce capitalists (not philanthropists only), whether large or small, to lay out their money in a similar way.

The model lodging-house alluded to here has now been in operation for nine months; and any one who looks at the accounts, may judge how it has hitherto been successful in a pecuniary point of view. It will be seen from the following statement that, after allowing a liberal margin for a depreciation fund and replacement of capital, there remains a very fair interest on the original outlay. It must be borne in mind, moreover, that it is only during the last two months of this first half year that the house has been regularly full; and had the receipts of the first four months been equal to those of the last two, as they probably will be in future, the profit would have been much greater. And, however great the increase of beds, and thereby of receipts, may be, the expenses, except in the single item of washing, remain just the same.

STATEMENT OF THE RECEIPTS AND EXPENSES FOR THE LATTER  
HALF OF THE YEAR 1851.

RECEIPTS from 3d. per bed.

Receipts for 26 weeks, from the 1st July to the 27th of December .....	130 4 9
	<hr style="width: 100px; margin-left: auto; margin-right: 0;"/>
	£130 4 9

\* I am induced to mention this here, as I have often heard conjectures and wonders as to the reason of the model lodging-house in Spitalfields not succeeding. I know, for I have been told by the poor themselves, that the reason I have given is the true one.

## EXPENSES.

Current expenses for 26 weeks, from 1st July to the 27th December, including wages to Superintendent, 1 <i>l.</i> per week, and 2 Assistants, 14 <i>s.</i> ditto .....	£68	17	10
Half year's rent .....	17	10	0
Ditto water rate .....	1	1	0
Ditto gas bill .....	7	16	6
Ditto poor rate .....	1	13	4
		<hr/>	
	96	18	8
Allowing for replacement of capital expended in alteration of premises, &c., 7½ per cent. per ann. on 270 <i>l.</i> .....	10	2	6
And allowing for depreciation of stock, &c., 10 per cent. per annum on 180 <i>l.</i> expended.....	9	0	0
Leaves a balance of profit equal to 6½ per cent. per annum on 450 <i>l.</i> total capital.....	14	3	7
		<hr/>	
	£130	4	9

There are 10,400 threepences in 130*l.* 4*s.* 9*d.*, and adding to that number an average of 40 persons a week who have one free bed, from having slept there six previous nights in succession, there has been accommodation provided during the half-year to the extent of 11,500 beds.

The success of this experiment has been so complete and so encouraging, that I am now enlarging the establishment by taking in more buildings, and otherwise; and in a short time there will be 110 beds.

It is important to observe that the superintendent—who should be a man of perfect temper, and at the same time great firmness—does not meddle with the inmates at all, except, as I have said, to see that each person pays his threepence and conducts himself properly. No drinking, or bad language, or gambling, is permitted; and any one who does not conform to the rules (which are simply those) is not allowed to remain in the house. In short they are as independent tenants as any gentleman in chambers, so long as they conduct themselves on the true principle of liberty, that is, of doing as they like, without either directly annoying other people, or doing what must tend to injure the institution of which they have voluntarily become members.

Many cases might be mentioned of the advantages,

besides the manifest ones of comfort and other obvious things, which have, by the confession of the inmates themselves, already accrued to them. Many of them have told the founder of this house that the going there has been the saving of them: some in this very simple way, that finding they would not be kept in the house if they did not behave well, and especially with sobriety, and finding also the great advantage of being there, they distinctly made their choice, and gave up their bad habits rather than give up their lodgings in the house. So that, in short, as the common houses directly, in the way before described, tend to hold men fast in a vicious way of living, these model lodging-houses, by the blessing of God, do the direct contrary. If they did nothing more, this would surely be recommendation enough to all thoughtful men who have any opportunity of aiding in such a work; and, considering the vast numbers of the poor in every considerable town, there are few who have not such an opportunity.

It is gratifying to be able to conclude this chapter by informing those who may be ignorant of it that even in the few years during which the model lodging-houses have been in operation, the advantages of them have become so striking, that parliament, last session, passed a general 'Act to encourage the Establishment of Lodging-houses for the Labouring Classes,' which may be adopted in any town containing more than 10,000 inhabitants, and which empowers town councils, and other governing bodies, to levy a rate for the purpose. An act was also passed in the same session for 'The well-ordering of Common Lodging-houses,' which may work well, and be of great benefit, if the inspector appointed happens to be a conscientious man, and determined to do his duty. But it seems to me that far too much is left to his discretion. But this by the way.

Here, then, is a great work for all alike—for every man's work is great, where it is his best endeavour, according to his means, small though they may be; and especially great

is it when it is to benefit his fellow-creatures. Let us hope to see, ere long, all the abodes of honest toil and industry in this land brought under similar happy influences; let us hope that the now well-known facts respecting them will, before long, remove out of the way of the poor an obstacle to their physical and moral improvement which must hitherto have been sufficient to neutralize almost every attempt to advance their condition, either as members of a civilized nation, or as members of Christ, children of God, and heirs of everlasting life.

‘We see, on every hand, stately palaces to which no country in the world offers any parallel. The houses of our rich are more gorgeous and more luxurious than those of any other land. Every clime is ransacked to adorn or furnish them. The soft carpets, the heavy rich curtains, the luxuriously easy couches, the beds of down, the services of plate, the numerous servants, the splendid equipages, and all the expensive objects of literature, science, and the arts, which crowd the palaces of England, form but items in an *ensemble* of refinement and magnificence which was never imagined or approached, in all the splendour of the ancient empires. But look beneath all this display and luxury, and what do we see there? A pauperized and suffering people. To maintain a show, we have degraded the masses until we have created an evil so vast that we now despair of ever finding a remedy.’\*

Do we despair? No; not yet, or now. There are surely gleams on the distant horizon telling of a brighter, and perhaps not far distant day, and bespeaking a gladder morrow. We have a great mission on this earth—a work of love; let us not neglect, or misuse, or undervalue it. *There is yet time*; still time for honest zeal to carry out its welcome work; still time for anxious benevolence to diffuse its healing powers; still time for useful necessary improvement to calm the shouts of turbulence, and quell the din of murmurs, gathering force the longer our neglect and

\* *Kay's Social Condition and Education of the People.*

unconcern continue. But delay may be fatal to nations, as well as to individuals ; misery may change into revolution ; revolution into anarchy ; and then the inscription on our Capitol will only be *C'est trop tard*.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease ;  
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold :  
Ring out the thousand wars of old ;  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand ;  
Ring out the darkness of the land ;  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.\*

\* Tennyson's *In Memoriam*.

## MODEL VERSUS COMMON LODGING- HOUSES.

BY J. NUTT, A CHIEF CONSTABLE, AND A GOVERNOR  
OF A GAOL.

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**I**N the neighbourhood of —, the population is chiefly employed either in the coal mines, or the potteries. They receive from 3s. 6d. to 5s. 6d. a day wages, the greater part of which is spent weekly, from Saturday to Tuesday, in public houses and profligacy. There are many schools in these districts, of which the parents avail themselves during the extreme youth of their children, after which they are taken away, and put to work in various ways, so that the limited information they had obtained is soon altogether forgotten, or, what is worse, misapplied, from the force of bad example. In the year 1849, I was appointed surveyor to various lodging-houses, and also to fulfil the duty of inspector of nuisances. The majority of the nuisances consisted of privies, the filth from which ran along the ground, having no place for its reception whatever, but lying exposed to the air. Some are very close to the houses, and in some instances they were actually inside the houses themselves. The constant cry-out was that the filth came from their neighbours. The water (of which I will presently speak) gathered into a pool, until it flowed into the different premises, and people were often called upon to remove nuisances they had not made themselves. The worst of it was that, supposing the Nuisance Removal Act to be put in force, the premises in a short time were as bad as ever, as there was no place to drain to, the system of drainage was so bad. As to the dwellings of the working classes and the poor, I will endeavour to describe them to you, as well as I can remember. There is no subject that requires more

inquiry under the Public Health Act, particularly in populous and industrial towns, than the structure and condition of the dwelling-houses of the poor. It is in these quarters, if not properly ventilated and drained, as too often is the case, that the seeds of disease, scattered by local circumstances of soil and atmosphere, are ripened into maturity, whence they spread in full-grown power amongst the better housed and better fed portions of the community. It is, therefore, upon grounds of interest, as well as those of humanity, that proper regard should be paid by every community to the condition of the very humblest abodes amongst them. Here, as in too many other places, I have found, unhappily, a total disregard of these considerations. The hard-working man, and the vagrant, are alike crowded into the most ill-ventilated abodes, and paying high, not to say exorbitant, rates for permission to tenant buildings, many of which ought not, with any regard to the health and decencies of society, to have been built at all. Mr. —, who, as a collector of poor rates, has a good opportunity of knowing what is actually paid, said, ‘I can hardly conceive a place affording worse accommodation for the money. I visited a great number of labourers’ houses; they generally consist of one small room on the ground floor, with a bedroom over, which is sometimes divided by a partition, sometimes not. This class of houses are built by speculators, and not a few by the workmen themselves. They are chiefly built upon freehold property, and put up in the cheapest manner possible; some cost as little as 10*l.* or 12*l.*, others from 20*l.* to 30*l.*, and a few from 50*l.* to 60*l.*, these last being occupied by the better class of workmen. There are some persons holding a large number of these houses, who find them a capital investment, paying from 20 to 30 per cent., and even more, interest.

The cottage property is generally in the hands of small proprietors, many of whom make a good profit of it. The ordinary rental paid by labouring persons who have families is generally 2*s.* 6*d.* for a cottage of one room below, and one above; for a house with two upper rooms, back and front, from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* is paid. The over-crowded state



of these miserable places is too fearful to contemplate. I could point out a collection of twenty houses, where I am sure you will find at any time in the aggregate 240 persons in them,—I refer to private houses. There are also a great number of lodging houses;—those kept by the Irish I have found to be over-crowded beyond anything imaginable. In houses of three and four rooms, I have counted as many as forty and upwards; they are stowed away in the straw the best way they can. There is considerable crowding in the houses, also, kept by the English. At the tramp lodging-houses, 8*d.* per night is charged. At these houses they have six or seven beds in one room. I have seen three in one bed, and, perhaps, six beds in one room. The largest number in any one house I visited was twenty: at this house there were two bedrooms. I found ten persons, men and women, mixed in this room. There might be a man and his wife lying on one part of the straw, and two or three young men lying within half a yard of them. I found four or five families in this house. The rooms were not above nine feet square, by six or seven feet high. In one room, in another house, there were ten persons sleeping. The atmosphere was almost stifling, and smelt dreadfully. It was with great difficulty I was able to count the number, in consequence of the way they huddled together. Their feet and hands touched one another. They were all lying on straw, in all manner of positions and forms. Most of them were naked, and others, who might only be covered with a sack, were only undressed partially. Some were lying in their own clothes. I think it would be a very beneficial thing if some local supervision was exercised over lodging-houses,—it would be the means of putting down crime, if the police, or any other persons, were authorized to look over them. They receive a great number of beggars, and are frequently a kind of receiving-house for thieves. The vagrants and tramps meet there to compare notes. I will give you an instance—but first must give one more statement as regards lodging-houses, as being a matter of importance.

I will describe one kept by a man named ——, who is

a retail brewer, which may be taken as a fair specimen of all. In his house there are two rooms for the reception of lodgers; one room is about twenty-eight feet by eleven, in which there are seven beds; the other is about twenty-one feet by ten, containing six beds. Between each bed there is merely space sufficient to walk; there are no curtains, consequently any person in either bed can overlook the whole room; any male and female who *say* they are man and wife, can have a bed; those females who wish, can sleep in the room set apart for single women, which is separated from that of the males by a door *not* locked. In such houses, vagrants of the worst description meet, and actually compare notes. I have frequently found note-books in their possession, containing an account of their routes, and pointing out what towns to be avoided on account of their having an efficient police, and also the names and residences of parties who can or cannot be victimised. Such vagrants will seldom visit a second time any town where they have been minutely searched, made to wash themselves, and then committed to gaol; they also warn others not to call at such places.

I also find, that retail brewers who keep common lodging-houses can almost set the vigilance of the police at defiance; for instance, at eleven P.M. the door is closed, the house may be quite full of company, drinking and gambling—on the police demanding admittance, some one says, from the inside, ‘yes, yes; stop a little, till I fetch the key;’ before the key is found, the cards, dice, and drink, are removed, and the officer is told, that ‘the parties in the house are all lodgers,’ but the minute after the officer leaves the house, the company resume their amusements with perfect impunity.

That there are retail brewers who are highly respectable men, and who keep very good houses, I do not deny; but they are in the proportion of about one in fifty.

From the manner in which the out-door relief is distributed, I fear much wrong is done. I will give two or three examples, which might, however, be increased to an incredible amount: viz. A cripple, with wife and four children,

has no relief; Mrs. ——, a widow, upwards of eighty years of age, has no relief; while Caroline ——, alias ——, who has had four bastard children, and who frequents the dancing-room, has relief; Sarah ——, a widow, with two children, also a frequenter of dancing-rooms, has relief; and a Mrs. ——, a private prostitute, has relief.

Any person unacquainted with the working of the system, could not suppose such things done; but I will give you an outline of a case in point—viz.,

The Chairman of the Board of Guardians is a maltster, and, of course, must serve his customers at all risks; the relieving officer is under the control of the Board, but more particularly of the chairman, consequently, any person recommended to the Board by a publican, is sure to be supported by the chairman and relieving officer; hence the fact of poor, well-conducted persons being in want of relief, while the dissolute frequenter of dancing-rooms and beer-shops is receiving support from the parish.

As regards lodging-houses being places where robberies are concocted, and petty larcenies, for the sake of obtaining expenses as witnesses, contrived, I will say a few words. The thefts are generally planned by tramps of a notorious character, who prowl about all day, and meet at the lodging-houses at night, where they carry out their plan by perhaps stealing a wretched article of clothing, which they pledge or carry off. Information is given by one of the party to the police; the offender is followed and taken into custody; the person who lost the property, and others of the party, are necessary witnesses, and appear before the magistrates, where they prove the case, and are consequently bound over to appear to prosecute at the sessions; they come forward punctually, but, by further arrangement among themselves, give such evidence as causes the grand jury to ignore the bills, in consequence of which the prisoner is discharged, and they all unite, having attained their objects—ay, the prisoner, perhaps, cleared—and others received payment for travelling and attendance. Under the present grand jury system these frauds are frequently practised, as the witnesses are sooner in court, and sent separately before the grand jury. When

each is asked what he knows of the transaction, he gives the information, and the grand jury, not having copies of the depositions before them, are unable to ascertain the truth, and the bills are consequently ignored. If grand juries are to be continued, the foreman ought to have the power of administering an oath, and also to have copies of the depositions in each case. The value of the article stolen is often not worth more than threepence or fourpence, and the expense of prosecution immense.

I promised to speak on the difficulty of obtaining water, and on the wretched drainage. I have seen nuisances taken out of privies and thrown into holes caused by the sinking of the ground from mining operations, and have seen people, who must have been aware of this, go to the holes and take water out of them for household purposes. This was frequent during the time of the cholera. I am now speaking of a mining district, where the water is paid for, and much impoverished by mining operations. I have seen several persons at one time lifting water out of a stagnant pool, on the left of the road leading to ———. This pool is quite thick with dirt and filth that is thrown into it, including dead dogs and cats. I went to the parties, and asked them what they intended to do with the water, and the impression on my mind is that they said they used it for household purpose. I have heard they used it to make tea. I did all I could to dissuade them from taking it, and told them what the probable result would be, particularly as the cholera was then about so badly; they did take it, however. There was not an unusual scarcity of water, but the cry out was very great.

I now propose to answer certain queries, in the order in which they were asked :—

#### QUERIES.

What effect have common lodging-houses on the morals of the people ?

#### ANSWERS.

Heretofore, a demoralizing effect ; not having, until lately, been placed under any control. They are resorted to by thieves, poachers, prostitutes, professional tramps, and impostors.

QUERIES.

In what manner are they let and sub-let?

How are they provided with furniture and other necessaries?

Are they often receiving-houses of stolen property?

Are petty larcenies got up for the sake of getting expenses, the witnesses burking the case before the grand jury, and having the bills ignored?

How many beds are there generally in each room of a common lodging-house?

What effect have union workhouses with regard to demoralizing young girls?

What effect have they with regard to improvident marriages?

What effect have wakes generally?

ANSWERS.

Half-yearly, quarterly, and weekly; and at nearly double the rent of any other house.

Badly.

I am not able to prove a case.

They will be greatly improved by the late law; but I consider they should be licensed only by magistrates at petty sessions.

I am not aware of any such case.

But have no doubt that bills have often been ignored by the prosecutor or principal witness or witnesses being tampered with, and varying from their original depositions.

It depends on the size of the room. They are as many as can fit, with only room to pass between.

I have referred to three unions; two are very favourable indeed. I am satisfied they have produced very good girls. One, I regret to say, has not done so.

I do not think they induce improvident marriages.

Drunkenness, dancing, seductions, and immorality.

QUERIES.

What effect have beer-houses generally?

What effect have bush houses, where beer is sold without licence at fairs?

ANSWERS.

There is no doubt they generally have a bad tendency, encourage immorality, and are resorted to by the worst characters of both sexes.

Bush houses are worse than beer houses during the fair, as they are not placed under any control, and are kept open and resorted to by the very worst characters, when every other house has been closed by the police.

The city of York; with a population of 36,000 inhabitants, has within its walls about seventy common lodging-houses; of these, fifty are of the lowest class, with wretched accommodation, without any separation of the sexes, and where the most demoralizing scenes of vice and debauchery nightly occur.

To preserve the travelling labourer and mechanic from the contaminating influence to which he was thus of necessity exposed, it was resolved, by a few individuals, to make an effort to form a society whose object should be to provide a model lodging-house for the better accommodation of the decent poor, without any addition to the charges at present paid in the common lodging-houses.

The old workhouse having been purchased for the Industrial Ragged School, a portion of it (deemed very suitable as an experiment) was offered at a low rent to this society; and these premises, having been repaired and rendered suitable for the purpose, were furnished for the reception of forty lodgers, at the following outlay:—

Repairs and necessary alterations . . .	£80	0	0
Forty iron bedsteads, 18s. each; bedding, &c. 42s. each . . . . .	120	0	0
Furniture, crockery, pans, &c. . . . .	50	0	0

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£250 0

Tracts and periodicals were also supplied, and a grant of Bibles and Testaments was obtained from the British and Foreign Bible Society, for the use of the lodgers.

Arrangements were made for opening the establishment for the reception of the inmates on the 1st July, 1850, and for providing each with a separate bed, partitioned off from the rest, and also a small pantry, cooking utensils, plates, knives, &c., salt, soap, water, and towels, for which is charged the sum of 3*d.* per night, or 1*s.* 6*d.* per week.

The following table of the weekly receipts for the first year will best show the progress of the institution:—

TABLE I.

1850.				£	s.	d.	1851.				£	s.	d.		
July	6	...	1st week	...	0	1	6	Jan.	4	...	27th week	...	1	8	0
	13	...	2nd	..	0	3	0		11	..	28th	..	1	12	6
	20	...	3rd	..	0	3	9		18	..	29th	..	1	6	3
	27	...	4th	..	0	4	3		25	..	30th	..	1	10	6
Aug.	3	...	5th	..	0	4	9	Feb.	1	..	31st	..	1	12	0
	10	...	6th	..	0	5	0		8	...	32nd	..	1	7	3
	17	...	7th	..	0	11	3		15	...	33rd	..	1	10	6
	24	...	8th	..	1	0	3		22	...	34th	..	1	8	6
	31	...	9th	..	0	19	9	March	1	...	35th	..	1	9	9
Sept.	7	...	10th	..	0	16	5		8	...	36th	..	1	13	0
	14	...	11th	..	0	14	3		15	...	37th	..	1	11	6
	21	...	12th	..	0	15	9		22	...	38th	..	1	11	9
	28	...	13th	..	0	13	6		29	...	39th	..	1	12	6
Oct.	5	...	14th	..	0	14	6	April	5	...	40th	..	1	8	3
	12	...	15th	..	0	11	9		12	...	41st	..	1	5	6
	19	...	16th	..	0	13	9		19	...	42nd	..	1	9	3
	26	...	17th	..	0	17	3		26	...	43rd	..	1	8	6
Nov.	2	...	18th	..	0	19	9	May	3	...	44th	..	1	3	6
	9	...	19th	..	1	1	6		10	...	45th	..	1	6	3
	16	...	20th	..	1	8	9		17	...	46th	..	1	16	0
	23	...	21st	..	1	16	3		24	...	47th	..	1	3	9
	30	...	22nd	..	1	11	3		31	...	48th	..	0	17	9
Dec.	7	...	23rd	..	1	4	0	June	7	...	49th	..	1	5	9
	14	...	24th	..	1	6	6		14	...	50th	..	1	5	3
	21	...	25th	..	1	2	9		21	...	51st	..	1	5	3
	28	...	26th	..	1	5	3		28	...	52nd	..	1	9	3

A list is kept by the superintendent, of the name, trade, and residence of every lodger. The following entry, taken from his book, will show the mode pursued, and also the class who have availed themselves of the accommodation afforded:—

TABLE II.

Name.	Occupation.	Residence.	M.	T.	W.	T.	F.	S.	S.	s.d.
Jas. Graham .	Stationer .	Leeds . . .	3	3	3	3	3	3	Free	1 6
Robt. Logan .	Ditto .	Leeds . . .	3	3	3	3	3	3	Free	1 6
John Wilson .	Labourer .	Wakefield .	3	3	3	3	3	3	Free	1 6
Jas. Lambert .	Whitesmith	Leeds . . .	3	3	3	3	3			1 3
Wm. Winter .	Labourer .	Halifax . .	3	3	3	3				1 0
Thos. Morris .	Baker .	Honden . . .		3	3					0 6
Margt. Morris	His wife .	Ditto . . .		3	3	3				0 9
T. Emmerson .	Joiner .	Malton . . .			3					0 3
R. Jennings .	Bricklayer.	Ditto . . .			3	3	3	3		1 0
Wm. M'Gee .	Dyer .	Manchester .				3	3			0 6
Wm. Bradley .	Gardener .	Bradford . .				3	3	3	3	1 0
Wm. Johnson .	Labourer .	Watergate, Yk.				3	3			0 6
Thos. Cooper .	Miner . .	Oldham . . .				3				0 3
George Hallom	Bricklayer.	Rochdale . .				3	3	3	3	1 0
Wm. Terry .	Ditto . .	Beverley . .				3	3	3		0 9
John Brown .	Labourer .	Pocklington .					3	3	3	0 9
John Needham	Sailor . .	Marygate, Yk.				3	3	3		0 9
Wm. Morris .	Shoemaker	Goodramgate, York . . .					3	3	3	0 9
Jos. Bradbury	Labourer .	Marygate, do.					3	3		0 6
Josh. Sebler .	Stonecutter	Selby . . .					3			0 3
James Jackson	Stationer .	Leeds . . .					3	3	3	0 9
John Thorpe .	Groom . .	Malton . . .						3	3	0 6
Wm. Ferrand	Gilder, &c.	Glasgow . .						3	3	0 6
18 0										

Many of the inmates express their gratitude for the very comfortable accommodation provided for them upon such reasonable terms, and the whole have conducted themselves satisfactorily, and cheerfully submitted to the regulations of the house.

It is also gratifying to state that the receipts for the first year have met the expenditure; and since that period there has been a steady increase, which promises that the establishment will not only be self-supporting, but ultimately remunerative.



# ON IMPROVING THE DWELLINGS OF THE POOR.

BY THE HON. F. BYNG.

If, without health, the rich man is poor, what must the poor man be?

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IN the beginning of 1847, I published *An Address to the Inhabitants of St. James'*, from which I shall make some extracts. They will prove that I then earnestly advocated, as I do now, the necessity of improving the dwellings of the industrious classes.

My address was so coldly received by my brother parishioners, that I should not have ventured to introduce any portion of it into this publication had I not found the following letter, written by Dr. Bowers, the then rector of St. Paul's Covent Garden (now dean of Manchester). Sympathy from such a quarter was to me encouraging and gratifying. It treats the subject under discussion so admirably, that I shall here transcribe it.

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Covent Garden, Jan. 30, 1847.

MY DEAR SIR,

Many thanks for the favour of your sensible and judicious letter to the inhabitants of your aristocratic parish. I hope it may be the means of exciting private persons, as well as public bodies, to look into the condition of their respective neighbourhoods, and do what they can to ameliorate the state of the poor by providing for them suitable,

instead of offensive residences. Cleanliness, in the old wives' proverb, is placed next to godliness: and I am clearly of opinion that, unless some better habitations are provided for the masses of our working population than exist in many districts, vice and immorality will be perpetuated in defiance of all efforts to counteract them.

In almost all our reformations, our rulers seem to me to have been beginning at the wrong end. Churches and schools have been the first objects, while that which is necessary to make churches and schools available—namely, the social condition of the poor, has been almost entirely neglected. The carrying out your plans would do more towards religion and moral improvement in one twelvemonth than all the philanthropic speeches that have been made on this subject, either in or out of parliament, from the earliest day of our remembrance to the present hour.

What you say on pp. 23, 24, I have been talking about almost incessantly for these last three years; and to testify my sincerity I am quite willing to co-operate, or rather work under your guidance in any way you think me competent, either now or at any future time.

I do not know the exact locality proposed, but benefit *must* arise if, in any locality, offensive habitations can be rooted out, and others erected in which the poor can dwell with due regard to decency—to say nothing of comfort.

The driving the poor into holes and corners is not only mischief in itself, but it also does injury to society. Ill-feelings are thereby generated, and day by day encouraged—opportunities of improvement are obstructed instead of being promoted; and such as may be well disposed at the outset become, as it were, unavoidably entangled in evil through contact with ill-disposed neighbours. It would seem as if the poor in London were worse off than in any other place. It is with them, either excessive labour, many times inadequately remunerated, or entire idleness, inducing vicious sentiments and profligacy in practice.

I have lived amongst the poor as much as most men, and I know their general state of thought and feeling. *They are not all bad*, but many of them have hearts tender as

our own, and affections towards their families which deserve the highest praise, and which, if duly cultivated and encouraged, would lead to good results. But see to what temptations they are exposed. The home is miserable, the husband leaves it; the elder children prefer the streets—drinking supplies the place of firing—and artifices and thefts are resorted to, to supply money for such purpose. Give them better homes, and you will create *at least one ingredient* towards improvement—SELF RESPECT. Leave them in their present dwellings, and you can expect nothing but what is now, by day, being exhibited.

I am convinced of the necessity of our doing something immediately towards bringing the poor, and such as are above the poor, in closer connexion with each other. In country places, rich and poor are pretty much mingled together as to places of abode: and whatever, in the way of misfortune or calamity, befalls the lower class, is quickly made known and relieved by the higher. Sympathies are excited, and some assistance (if not always enough) is soon afforded. In London, nothing of this kind is to be seen. The sufferings of the poor are scarcely known, except by and through the clergy and their helpers, the district visitors. The best hearts may be breaking 'in the top floor or the third story,' and not an atom of relief is attainable, because not only are their *necessities* unknown, but even their *persons*. If you can provide places for these poor people to live in, which shall always be deemed respectable, there will always be a chance of some kind-hearted individuals becoming acquainted with them, supporting them under difficulties, and encouraging them in ways of goodness. I will say nothing of what the rich ought to do upon this occasion, but I will be bold to say that the small tradesmen in the neighbourhood of your small houses will be much benefitted, and, therefore, that they ought to be called upon to aid you.

In a *money* point of view I think your plan must answer. No houses pay better than low lodging-houses. For the like rent better may be supplied, and as they will be always

occupied, the money return will be certain, and, I have no doubt, sufficient.

Good luck attend you in all your operations. The work you have engaged in is one of the most benevolent and praiseworthy that ingenuity can conceive or ability execute, and . . . . .

Yours truly,  
G. H. BOWERS.

The Hon. Frederick Byng,  
St. James's-place.

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#### EXTRACTS (1847).

In addition to the nuisances already described, there are numerous narrow streets in the parish, and twenty-eight courts and alleys, many of which are open only at one end—literally *culs de sac*. The greater portion of the houses in these places are let out in rooms to the families of artisans. These lodgings are of a most indifferent description, ill-ventilated, worse-drained, wanting in water, and every proper convenience, and within and without reeking with foul odours . . . . . as deserving of especial notice, John-court, Ham-yard, New-street, Peter-street, Hopkins-street, Husband-street, and Green's-court—the state of these places being such as to defy description, and to be conceived only by those who have personally visited them. . . . .

At the angle of *Hopkins-street* and *New-street*, Golden-square, are cowsheds which range *one above another*, within a yard of the back of the houses. Forty cows are kept in them, two in each seven feet of space. There is no ventilation, save by the unceiled tile roof, through which the ammoniacal vapours escape into the houses. At the opposite side of the houses, in the same street, thirty-two cows stand side by side. . . . . In this atmosphere, reeking with all these pestiferous effluvia, these creatures are kept close shut up, *on each floor*, night and day, till their milk failing, they are consigned to the butcher.

The following table, exhibiting the rate of mortality in

the several districts of St. James' parish, is also confirmation of what has been stated —

Districts.	Population in 1841.	Registered Deaths in 1845, 1846.	Proportion of Deaths to Population.
St. James's-square	13,337	148	1 in 90
Golden-square .	13,621	378	1 in 36
Berwick-street .	10,449	248	1 in 42

The Golden-square district includes the workhouse, where many are carried from various parts merely to die. The actual numbers approach perhaps those of Berwick-street district. Take these two districts, therefore, as 1 in 42, and the result shows there is more than *double* the number of deaths in proportion to population, when the comparison is made with St. James's-square district. Did accurate materials allow of a more detailed examination, could the mortality of the courts be compared with that of the squares, and that of the wide streets with the narrow, on the same basis of relative population, the most overwhelming conviction would be obtained of the immense, and, when we consider, the unnecessary, suffering and waste of human life . . . . .

After this detail of abominations existing, not in a parish like Spitalfields, but in one where the Court is held; where palaces, and palatial club-houses, and the mansions of the great, the rich, and the powerful, are situated; where the bishop of the diocese and a large staff of clergy reside; surely, it may be pardoned me if I now proceed to address a few words to those rich, and powerful, and noble individuals on their duty to themselves, and to their poorer and more helpless fellow-parishioners. I say, their duty to themselves; because although they, and their families and dependents, may, to a certain degree, escape much of what, from the evils enumerated, the poor may have to suffer, it is a law, and a beneficial law, that no one class can suffer alone. . . . . But in that wretched locality, with which he (the rich man) would fain avoid all commu-

nication, and among that population so neglected, the seeds of disease are for ever rooting themselves afresh. Cholera and small-pox, measles and fever, may first attach themselves in the abodes of wretchedness; but as they gather strength, the habitations of the wealthy are invaded. The tainted atmosphere which is generated in the alley, will ultimately convey the infection to dwellings which else seemed guarded from the approaches of disease. . . .

. . . For their own health's sake, then, and for that of their children and dependents, let the affluent and influential rouse themselves to exertion. . . . I cannot refrain from asking the question, whether society has a right to allow the industrious classes to be placed in a position that renders it impossible for them to observe those decencies of life on which moral sensibility so greatly depends. What can be expected of those who grow up with every incentive to evil, and no counterbalancing public opinion of their equals (the opinions which all classes chiefly regard) to check them. Under the like circumstances it ceases, with those who reflect, to be a wonder that immorality prevails; the astonishment, on the contrary, is excited by finding that all are not rendered equally vicious. From the ranks of this population are continually recruited the bands of young thieves and prostitutes that disgrace alike our streets and the authorities who have allowed so neglected a class to exist . . . . Until we have banished every obstacle to healthy physical and moral feelings, between which there is a more intimate relation than is ordinarily supposed, we may talk sentiment, discourse morality, preach religion, but still leave one great practical element of success untouched. . . . If, therefore, as at present, the working classes, in towns especially, are suffering from evils which the necessities of their condition have forced them to endure, as being beyond their power to remedy, let those who have the power exert the will, and step in to their rescue. If funds are wanting to secure to the artisan and the labourer healthy habitations, let them be forthcoming, not as mere charity, but as a matter of justice, entailed on wealth for the privilege of exemption from poverty.

On the same space of ground which now is covered with wretchedness and filth, decent, wholesome, well-planned dwellings, replete with conveniences, might generally be erected. . . . The costly modern improvements which have taken place may have widened the streets where dwell the independent gentry or the wealthy tradesman, but so far from benefitting, in any way, the humble artisan, these very improvements have actually narrowed his opportunities of obtaining the shelter of a home for himself and family, and forced from him a higher price for inferior accommodation. . . .

In conclusion, I am aware that a certain class of persons will say, 'Let us do what we will, make sanitary regulations, educate the people, provide for all their wants, physical, moral, and religious, we still cannot banish evil and misery from the world; Utopia will be still merely an agreeable fiction.' To this class of objectors, who, because they cannot do everything, refuse to attempt anything, the answer is, 'If we do all we can do, and something yet remains to be done, we are not responsible—our consciences are free.' Besides, we can point to the evil that might have been as misery avoided; to the good accomplished as a triumph gained—an earnest of future success; and, in contemplating the contrast, we shall ever yet be reminded that when we have done all that in our span of life and limit of opportunity it has been permitted us to attempt, there are others yet to follow, who, from the vantage-ground we have won, will, with new hopes and fresh vigour, press ever onward in doing justice, by substituting preventive measures for palliative charities; and we shall feel at least that we have not been a party to the wrongs which now undermine the happiness of our fellow-men.

# GAOL REVELATIONS

BY A GOVERNOR.

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THE condition of our criminal population is one of the most anxious subjects we can deal with. Where do they come from? how were they educated? did want or vice drive them to crime? into what classes may felons be divided? what is the distinction between criminals and tramps, or vagrants? is the assumption of the garb and tone of the beggar a cloak for felony? On these questions we propose to make a few observations in the following pages:—

The greatest evil and cause of crime is vagrancy, from whatever source it arises. No doubt many painful circumstances conduce to such a state of society, especially in the opening career of a wandering life; and, on the contrary, there are many, and by far the great majority, who are not deserving the slightest sympathy, excepting from their lost and degrading position as outcasts and pests to society—they are incorrigible rogues and vagabonds whom no law at present in force can deter, and no admonition, advice, or instruction can amend. The conclusion forced upon us is that the following are the chief causes of vagrancy,—viz.,

1. Poverty and destitution from want of employment.
2. Love of a wandering life, idleness, and dissipation.
3. Early habits of loose morality caused by want of proper parental care and instruction.
4. The encouragement given to crime by parents' bad instruction and bad example.
5. The loss of one or both parents.



For the suppression of such an alarming itinerant and criminal habit of life, increasing daily, the interposition of some stringent legislative measure is required to deter, where the law at present cannot amend, and where it is in reality set at defiance, or the infliction of it considered as a boon, especially in the winter season. The Vagrant Act is quite inefficient—committals and recommittals are greatly on the increase. A great number of boys and girls are associated together, wandering about the country without any visible means of subsistence other than begging and thieving, and by such other means as women of the lowest order and most depraved moral principles can obtain. In this establishment there are one hundred and eighty-seven persons confined, of whom sixty-eight are under twenty years of age, and all of the vagrant class, with the exception of four belonging to the Riding; and nearly every one of those sixty-eight have been recommitted from once to ten times, and they have been as frequently in other prisons. Scarcely one in fifty has been brought up to any trade or employment; some may have worked a little at one thing, and some at another, but they none of them know anything by which to gain a livelihood. Legislative interference is needed to weed them out or to punish them till they are deterred and driven to their homes or parishes—for vagrants will be vagrants, and thieves will be thieves, unless they are reclaimed by punishment. In time all the boys get convicted of felony. I know boys, within these last few years, who have been seventeen times committed for vagrancy before they were seventeen years of age, and most of them have had very little house shelter, their mode of sheltering being that of going from barn to barn, women and men all herding together in one common mass of filthiness and depravity (this is what vagrants call skippering it). Some of these vagrants, on being discharged, when advised and admonished for their conduct, will tell us they will soon be back for something worse; and in many instances they have verified their words in a few days afterwards, by being sent back committed for felony.

No criminal subject requires greater and graver con-

sideration than this. Such is the progressive increase of vagrancy—such its attendant graver offences—such the predatory habits of this class, that in a short time neither persons nor property will be safe. Vagrancy is now, within the last ten or twelve years, a new thing. Formerly vagrants were persons out of work seeking employment, but now they are composed of youths, chiefly boys and girls, who have no trade in their hands, who do not want work, and would not work if they had it.

The greatest number of those who frequent prisons are not to be called ignorant—they generally possess a great deal of worldly information, and they all, with few exceptions, might, with the instruction and information they possess, become respectable members of society, if their dispositions inclined to it. Their educational instruction is as good as that of the generality of the labouring classes of the country, and their worldly knowledge is far more extended.

Want is a cruel evil, and there is no doubt that some honest good men sometimes get into prison from this cause; but this is generally only for one, and not for reiterated offences, and on recommitments. There would be no difficulty in separating those whom want drives to places of this sort from the incorrigible vagrants who are but too well known.

The number of prisoners confined at present is one hundred and eighty-seven, and of these seventy-five are vagrants, and thirty-one vagrant felons. This is the general state of this gaol with regard to offenders, excepting in the depth of winter, when a much greater number of vagrants has hitherto been committed. Thirty-four only belong to the Riding, the rest are strangers, many Irish, and of Irish parents.

The same offenders are often confined in the gaol, once, twice, and three times—very frequently for a great many more than three times.

It may be asked, if they are imprisoned again, why this is? Do they prefer being in gaol on the solitary system to seeking work?

They generally say they have no work, and no place to

go to. With regard to work, and their apparent disinclination to work, it may be affirmed they are not only committed in winter, but very frequently, also, through the summer; and most of them, when released, neither work nor seek work. The great majority of them have parents and friends living, who would be glad to receive them at home; and if there should be no attachment to friends and home, the workhouse ought to be the place of resort, instead of prisons. Whatever be the excuses of the young vagrants and felons, not the slightest credence, in nineteen cases out of twenty, can be given to them—in fact, if they were as well known to the world as they are to persons in the situation of governors of prisons, they would be neither credited nor assisted by the most benevolent. They prefer being in gaol in the winter season, especially in severe weather, for whenever the weather becomes stormy, vagrants are brought from all parts of the Riding. If the constables will not apprehend them under the Vagrant Act, they deliberately and wilfully break windows before his face, and thereby compel him to take them into custody. The solitary system is a punishment to some prisoners, but a boon to such as we have been speaking of; they are not equal to the privations and sufferings of sleeping in barns, and other out-buildings in the depth of winter, in severe weather, and their general mode of living incapacitates them for it.

It may be asked whether they commit crime on purpose to winter in gaol?

A very great number of instances from time to time have come under notice, not only of sturdy vagrancy, of breaking and destroying property, but of felony too, when it has been stated by them, that they have violated the law, for the purpose of shelter; and some, who knew the rules well, have committed felony, for the purpose of getting a better diet than that allowed for vagrants. Some of the vagrants appear to commit the first offence of felony, knowing that the penalty of transportation will not be inflicted, and that their punishment will be as light, if not lighter, than for vagrancy, although a conviction will generally cost from

about 10*l.* to 20*l.* Some felons do come from want, and for shelter; and others, when they cannot evade the officers of justice, plead this in mitigation of their sentences before the courts. This is tested by their being in prison constantly, both in summer and winter. When persons thieve for the purpose of getting into prison, they most frequently take property only in the presence of others; when detection is sure, and immediate.

It may be asked, Are the police a check to vagrancy and crime, &c.?

Nothing has ever checked vagrancy in this Riding, but the adoption of a lower scale of diet about two years ago; which, at that time, soon greatly relieved the prison. But the consequence was, that the other gaols in the county became equally crowded—the distribution of such offenders having become more equal.

The police are no check to vagrancy. Vagrants do not care for them: for they will give themselves up, and threaten to do something worse, if the officers do not take them; and they thus compel the force to act. The police are a check to felony, for few men like to be taken as *real* thieves. Vagrants do not care for the first conviction of felony; yet they will do any thing rather than be caught. It would be a much greater gratification to them, if they could get off with their plunder, without being subject to a criminal investigation.

As to the proportion of juvenile offenders, it is not more than one in fifty, and they are chiefly boys, resident in the county; for vagrant boys are generally committed along with adults, and take their trials with them; therefore this act is good so far as it extends (with few solitary exceptions) to those whose previous character is well known, and whose offences are known to be the first.

It is a question whether this act is beneficial as applied universally; or whether it has been the means of sending into the country many young thieves from large towns, who have been previously convicted more than once, and whose first acts of delinquency have exhausted the milder punishments of the law designed to correct them.

These dread the more severe punishment of being indicted at sessions, and being subject to transportation—and, with all their experience, they betake themselves to a wandering thievish life, staying as long in towns and counties as they can, without subjecting themselves to the more severe penalties of the law. No doubt many instances might be selected amongst the vagrant juvenile class, where the offender is well known, and his previous character too, and it is his first offence, where he might, with perfect safety, be convicted of it summarily; the punishment would be the same, and he would not be subject to the odium of a public conviction, and afterwards to be so publicly known to have committed a crime. But with regard to strangers, it is unsafe to convict them otherwise than the law now in force does in dealing with felons; as in many instances their previous character gets well known before their trials, and they thereby are deservedly punished for all their previous misconduct.

As regards preventive measures?

These remarks may appear harsh to this class, but they are the source of all evil to the country, the great item in the county's expenses, the plunderers of the property of the honest inhabitants; the honest and inexperienced are duped and corrupted by them. If a mode of punishment were designed and enforced for a few years, subjecting the offenders to transportation at sessions after so many convictions for vagrancy, and power were given to the magistrates under summary jurisdiction to flog all under a certain age, this would, in three or four years, greatly relieve the county, by restraining the best of this class, and taking away the incorrigible ones. And this is the only effective way experience can suggest, as likely to prove beneficial and effective. Vagrancy is not now what it was some years ago; *i. e.*, vagrants are now, most of them, thieves and vagabonds, instead of broken-down tradesmen, seeking honest employment, who were really deserving of all the kindness and sympathy that could be shown them under such distressing circumstances. Those men now are rarely to be found going through the country, as the cheapness of passage from town to town by railway has put it in the power of most of them

to go from one end of the country to the other, at a very trifling cost, such as the Trades' Union themselves will support.

The low lodging-houses, I suppose, are a great evil. It may be asked, What do they pay per night? Whether it would be beneficial to license them, in the same way as beer-shops?

The low lodging-houses are the greatest depôts for crime, and the most polluted sinks of iniquity, that can possibly be imagined. They are a sore evil. They are the harbour for the worst and most experienced thieves, and the greatest adepts at crime. Men and women, thieves and prostitutes, here horde together in disgusting multitudes, concocting and devising plans of robbery, each one's experience adding to that of another. They are cheats at unlawful games; they are pickpockets, highway robbers, and burglars; not an honest man, nor woman, can be found amongst them. In this small town, during a fair, seventy persons have slept heads to heels in a common lodging-house, with three small rooms on the ground-floor, and as many on the upper floor, sheltered by a tier-fall roof, where there was a case of small-pox, and a case of typhus fever, at the same time. If all this is not an evil, what is? The licensing of these places will be found a grand benefit. The inmates, generally, pay from threepence to fourpence per night. In small towns, where a police establishment exists, the officer will be fully competent to give the required attention to the lodging-houses, without the expense of creating officers for the purpose of visiting those places.

Labourers' wages are from ten to twelve shillings per week, which they spend in their maintenance. Very little drunkenness is observable amongst this class in rural districts. The construction of the railroads has had a great tendency towards creating vagrancy in the adults, and of making men dissatisfied with their wages in agriculture; the railway labourers are the most lawless class of labourers in this country, and most of them are tainted with crime.

Gaols affect the character for better or for worse? A man who has been guilty of any illegal act, does not better

his character, neither does imprisonment better it in the eyes of the world ; whether it may have bettered the prisoner himself there are not sufficient means to ascertain.

It is difficult to see whether parents can be forced to educate their children ; or whether the state could take them by coercive means from their parents for that purpose ; if it could be practicable, it would be a very great boon to the country.

The country cannot do without police-rates, and must have police officers. There must also be officers for gaols. There must be prosecutions, &c., conveyance of prisoners to gaols ; and, lastly, enlargement of gaols, for the lion has not yet laid down to the lamb, nor is the sword turned into a ploughshare.

Crime is decidedly on the increase in proportion to the increase of population.

Irish distress and Irish vagrancy are a great expense to the nation.

It is not meant that prisoners should be immoderately punished, so as to injure their health, &c., nor should they be at all neglected ; but, on the contrary, have all the advantage along with their imprisonment of moral and religious training that can be afforded them ; so that if the one will not reform, the other may deter.

# LEAVES FROM THE LIVES AND OPINIONS OF WORKING MEN.

BY THEMSELVES.

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## I.

### STATEMENT OF A WORKING MAN.

I AM by trade a boot and shoemaker, and have in my lifetime paid much attention to political subjects. I do not consider myself a disaffected subject, because I would not take any rash means to obtain any good; and if I could not get what I called right, I would remain as I am for ever. As to the Charter, it is not only necessary for our welfare, but for the safety of the nation also; it is requisite to keep peace, because no nation can rest satisfied without it is governed by its intellect. We know that we are not in possession of the franchise; and those who have got it, are not capable of judging of half of its worth; that is the reason why I hold many of the points of the Charter to be good. I am a Chartist in principle, though I belong to nothing of the kind now. I shall never enter any political society; that is, to enrol my name in any political society. I did so once, and that was about six weeks before the 10th April, 1848; and then I left it, and have never attended a political meeting of any sort or kind since. There are a great many things that I consider are oppressions upon the working classes, and the greater portion of the uneducated population make such improper use of what they do get, that I am of opinion that the rich are afraid to trust them with many privileges, on that account. The depravity of a majority of the labouring classes is very great; and is, perhaps, attributable to the infidelity which exists among them; and I am sorry to say, I was once an infidel myself; but, thank



God, I am not so now. The reason of their infidelity I attribute to the clergy not living according to their profession, as regards a moral life, and an assiduous attention to their congregation, and to the performance of their duties generally. It is, however, always looked after in this parish, or else I should never have changed my opinions. I should have remained in the same state of mind, if I had not been visited by the Rev. ——. He drew my attention to the subject of religion, and I was induced to study for myself. By doing so, I discovered that Jesus Christ was truly the Son of God, which I had formerly rejected. I before that time accepted him as a good man only. I did not believe him to be our God; and I can further state, that the prevalent opinion of my trade is, that Jesus Christ is only a reformer upon earth. That opinion prevails amongst a great many mechanics, as well as in my own trade. I was first visited by the Rev. Mr. ——, three years ago last August, and soon afterwards I began, by his persuasion, to visit his school-room, and hear his lectures; he continued to visit me, and I only went occasionally at first; then I read the Bible, and studied different points of scripture, and began to understand them a little, though they were but stumbling-blocks to me before I found that God, in his justice and mercy, could not have saved his people by any other plan of redemption than by sending his Son to die for us. It is now my own candid opinion that that must be so, and nothing could shake my opinion. With respect to Chartism, I say again that I am a Chartist only as regards its principles, because I consider it in accordance with Christianity. In support of this, the Scripture teaches me that Christ advocated Christian brotherhood and fellow feeling. And if Christianity were a little more on the increase amongst the labouring population, there would not be so much want and destitution throughout the land, because the people would be more provident. I have found that a Christian man, in proportion to his Christian bearing, becomes gradually and equally provident. It has been an independent system and method in our trade amongst journeymen who work for shops never to take off their hats in

the presence of their employers, or even in the presence of a customer, that may be in the shop at the time; this, in my opinion, arises in a great measure from our employers not being thoroughly practical men—men, perhaps, who never saw a boot made; and when we are in the presence of our employers we never pull off our hats, because we feel no interest in it, knowing that that man could not live without us. But as to myself, I always pay due respect to my employers, so far as thanking them for my wages when I receive them, and should never have thought of changing from journey-work to ‘mastering’ without a capital, if I had been treated as I know I had deserved to have been. There have been in our trade the most depraved characters; but they are not as bad now as they were some years ago. I do not know any other mechanics who act with the independence as we do upon entering the shop of our employers: all other trades used to pay respect, even to their foreman, much more their masters. *Our trade has always been the first in all political movements;* and we are such a numerous body of men, having so much time to think, that we pay more attention to such subjects than persons engaged in other trades. We can work and think, which men in other trades cannot well do; and, again, journeymen shoemakers work three or four together in a garret, when they have an opportunity of exchanging their ideas, and finding out where they imagine the evil lies. Perhaps in some cases they may be wrong; but they certainly do discuss their political matters in that way. For my part, I consider our trade very much oppressed from its irregularity. Perhaps twelve shops of the west end of London may give liberal wages for work, whilst the shoemakers in some parts of the kingdom are working for two shillings a day. The aristocratic shops, where the aristocracy purchase their goods, pay a good price to the journeymen, so that they have fair wages; but take the kingdom throughout, and it will be found we are worse paid than any other trade in England; besides, we work more hours for the money, even if we earn it. It would not be just or honourable to find fault with those masters that do pay liberal wages, although it is pretty cer-

tain the working classes of the community cannot be supplied with shoes to their feet if we are to be paid for our labour according to the present system. We do not wish to do any master tradesman an injury; we only want what is fair and equitable. Our trade is different to all others in one respect—viz., piecework. Our trade is all piecework; there is no working by the day, but so much for each pair of shoes or boots, according to the rate of wages given by the master, which varies all over the nation according to the nature of the town or place. One price might be given at a watering-place, whereas the rate of wages in the metropolis would be different; so would it likewise be at a university; and, in fact, it varies in particular districts. In Staffordshire, among the potteries, workmen are making strong men's shoes for one shilling and fourpence a-pair, while I have received five shillings for the same amount of labour in London. I consider this state of things requires altering; for we do not want one man to be fairly paid, and his brother-workman so unfairly and unjustly remunerated for his labour. And, in this instance, some masters in the trade receive the same prices from their customers as are received by those who pay more wages to their workmen. The masters having power to supply themselves with men at their own price where they have got an extensive capital, whilst the more liberal ones are not so greedy of gain, and voluntarily pay their workmen a fair rate of wages, knowing, and believing, that the 'labourer is worthy of his hire.' Inquiry upon this head will prove the undoubted truth of my statement. The French masters in our trade are giving wages adequate to their labour; and, in some cases, higher than some of our English masters, who get seven or eight shillings a-pair more for their articles. Northampton is a regular mart for all the cheapest workmanship in the trade that the labouring class is supplied with. It is a place where no single-handed man can live;—he must have a whole family at work, because a single-handed man is so badly paid, that he can scarcely provide the necessaries of life. I, myself, have worked in Northampton and Wellingborough, where the remuneration is upon a similar scale, and where I have seen

little boys, about seven years of age, with a pair of upper leathers upon their arms, which they have closed. Thus have they been engaged at work, whilst their education has been entirely neglected; and if they had not been employed in this way, they must have starved, their parents being unable to support them. As soon as they are big enough to handle an awl, they are obliged to come down stairs, and work; and then society is blamed for what it cannot help; because, by the neglect of the education of children in this way, when they grow up, they become degraded and demoralized. At Cambridge, where I have been likewise engaged in my trade, the journeymen's work is not so good as it is at Oxford, of which I am a native; the cause of that I cannot say. Whether the students pay as much for their goods at Cambridge as at Oxford, I do not know; but the wages are certainly different. Why such a state of things can exist I do not understand. If the working classes could be weaned from their habit of frequenting public-houses so much, we should be, no doubt, more readily listened to by those high in power and authority, which might have the effect of bettering our condition, because they would not have the chance of throwing in our teeth, that we do not make a proper use of what little we do get; besides, they would not be able to call us, as they do, the 'swinish multitude,' and say, it was too dangerous to grant us a privilege. For my own part, I think our class deserves the opprobrious term, which education alone can destroy. Whilst a man is in ignorance, he is to be pitied; and those who are a little better informed, are glad to listen to anything they are told to their advantage. I am a man who would not spare my own class if it deserved such oppression, nor on the other hand would I be against it for the sake of interest, or from any mercenary motive. Truth is the thing that is necessary, and 'truth will ever triumph,' that is my motto.

During the last two or three years I have shut myself up from society completely as it were, that is, from political society, through taking up Christian principles, and following out the dictates of its doctrines. With regard to

the present grievances in this country, I think the present state of things will ever remain until we shall have had an extension of the franchise. Our wants are not yet made known because we have not proper representation; and it is natural to suppose that a man would represent his constituency, under the present circumstances, for his own safety. He serves them that send him to parliament. Our men, that is, the men in my trade, have been a very independent class of men from time immemorial; that is easily accounted for, because it is a trade that can never be dispensed with, neither can machinery be invented to affect it any way; however much it may be reduced and brought down, it will still remain an essential business to the community, because, rich or poor, people cannot do without shoes of some sort. My opinion is, we ought to have a through investigation into the condition of the working classes of all trades. If an inquiry were to be established into all the different trades, then a better and more correct judgment could be formed as to the evils which are in existence, and the oppressions of the labouring man would be manifested. A general good is the thing that is required; and I consider it would not be advocating my own principles to stand out for my own trade in this particular, whilst there are so many others in the same predicament; in many cases they may suffer more than we, but that is impossible to state at present with any degree of certainty, until such an inquiry as I have alluded to shall have taken place. I advocate equal privileges to all honest men who can read and write; and no man would stand up as a friend of his country and say that a felon—a convicted felon—should ever be intrusted with privileges that should be enjoyed by honest men. There are many faults in our class by which we suffer, we who are anxious to earn our daily bread by honest labour: such faults are in men who have no principles of their own other than to live without toil—who are too lazy to work, and are afraid to thieve, and even afraid to defend their own opinions, if they have any, lest they should not be able to scheme upon society. That is a class of men I utterly despise. They are more to be despised than those who dare to defend

their opinions in the presence of a prince. It is not for me to make propositions, but could I have the power, I would oblige all the idle classes to emigrate,—compel them either to work or perish, keeping the good at home: this would be a fit punishment for the idle class, whilst the industrious would be equally rewarded in the privilege of remaining in their native place. At present we are losing our best mechanics, who are emigrating to America and other places as fast as they can go, for the want of encouragement in this country.

I am not so well skilled in political knowledge now as I was, and indeed, I have hardly in the last two years read a newspaper, because the statements concerning many parties in the political world I found to be untrue. Many of the statements in the newspapers were so coloured, and others disguised, that I became quite disgusted with them: in many instances statements, which ought to have been published to the world were altogether hidden, and not spoken of in any way, whilst it might have been of advantage to the poorer classes of society. Turning again to the subject of religion, I am satisfied in my own mind, that no principle, great or small, unless it be guided by Christianity, could prove other than a failure. With respect to trade in general, there is such an immense amount of competition, that even the masters in our trade cannot make so good, or anything like so good, a living as they could about seven years ago, because they keep reducing the prices of different articles, and the workmen's wages are being continually lowered as a natural consequence. Labour has been regulated by the demand and the supply—therefore when the supply is great, masters always take advantage of it; when the market is full of labour they know they can have it at their own price, and when they find they effect a reduction of wages, they lower their prices in order to increase their customers. This is an astounding fact, but it is the case with many. Young beginners having small capital, are apt to do so; and in this assertion I am sure I can be borne out by all trades. A great portion of the evils among the working classes arise from neglected education, and it is difficult to say how a correct system of

education is to be established ; for there are some persons amongst the working classes, so brutish in their habits that they would not go to school, or send their children, if they were paid to do so : and so indolent and so given to depraved habits are some of the people, that they appear almost to have a horror of schooling their children ; that is, owing to the parents themselves being uneducated, and consequently they do not see the utility of education for their children : and so we are likely to go on from generation to generation without an alteration of the present state of things. The object of a government in a country should be to make the people loyal, for a king's strength lies in his people ; for instance, a loyal army would rather fight than retreat, and would rather support any government that they approved of than attack it, or disregard its measures. I used to attend political meetings, but was always very cautious myself, and never, in fact, made any speeches at any public meeting, though I listened to them attentively, and gave private opinions upon their subjects. Although Hume never professed himself a Chartist to my knowledge, I always considered him favourable to our class ; and I always admired the late Sir Robert Peel in his political career. With reference to the present government of the country, which I understand is a monarchical government, there are so many of the people who have lost self-respect, that I think it is necessary that they should be bound to respect others, to keep them in order, and therefore I hold with the Queen and her supremacy.

We are not sufficiently advanced to make such rapid changes and alterations as have been effected in France, nor do I consider it, under any circumstances, prudent to attempt such a thing as a change in the present generation, because the people are not fit to live without it, and when they are fit to live *without* government, then I think government will fall of itself. I think that there is no doubt but that we have men in the house of parliament who would overthrow everything for the mere establishment of themselves ; and I think it would be very dangerous, though I was once a Chartist myself, to have such a man as Feargus O'Connor put in power. He himself might have the ambition to become

a king, and would, no doubt, accept the office were he in a position to attain it. It is no use to *demolish* one system if we are not prepared to build up a better one: it is easier to destroy than to build or repair the injury that may be inflicted. I think there is a very great reform needed with regard to what they call '*cheap law*,'—the County Courts, I mean. I think it would be satisfactory to all classes of the community, and, certainly, to the *religious world*, to have a thorough reform in this respect. Now there is another evil in this country. The dissenting ministers of this country are shut out from a collegiate education, unless they subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles of the Christian faith; and though they may differ, perhaps, only in one small point, yet for this they are excluded altogether. It is a thing I have complained of very much, as being oppressive and unjust; I hear others do the same. I like to be more liberal. I would not shut any out of *heaven*, because they did not think exactly with me on all points, whilst they strove for a knowledge of divine truths, and did not see them exactly in the same light as I did. There is another great thing, which I think would be advantageous to the landowners, and tend to the encouragement of industry, that is, *to keep no land idle* whilst the people would get what it is capable of producing; and I think that if they kept the whole of their land employed, although they might not get quite as much for it, they would still be better off by receiving *a something* for it, than by allowing it to lie in waste; besides, they themselves would be promoters of good, by giving no excuse for crime amongst the labouring classes, which would be a grand object, and a stimulus to industry. The honest man would like to spend his hard-earned shilling, and would look upon himself as a man, feeling inspired with a proper knowledge of his duty.



## II.

## MEMOIRS OF A WORKING MAN.

As a working man, attempting to convey an idea of the sufferings and privations of *his* order to another, I do not know a better way to succeed than to select some average individual case, and give a brief sketch thereof. Being better acquainted with my own than any others, I shall choose it—albeit I could speak of many far more interesting, and a hundred times worse off, than myself. It is a task, however, that I commence with some reluctance, for several reasons. The first is, inability; my trade being very dissimilar from those who handle the pen (yet I am continually employed in improving the *understandings* of men); another reason is, I believe the article produced will not be the article required.

I was born in a small village in North Britain; one of a family of ten (scattered now far and wide; the wanderers, I suppose, not having any good news to tell, seldom communicate with one another). Our parents, respectable though poor, were members of the Scottish Church; we were religiously educated, taught to observe the ‘Sabbath-day, and keep it holy;’ to do no work thereon, to read nothing save the Bible, the Catechism, or other strictly religious books. We had to attend the *kirk* forenoon and afternoon, the Sunday school in the evening, and family worship at night; were sent to the day school also, but as soon as we could do anything to earn a little money we left school and went to work. When scarcely eight years old, I was sent to farm-service, where I soon learned other lessons than those taught me by my parents. I was taught to be ridiculously superstitious, being entertained every night with ghost stories, which took possession of the mind, to the exclusion of useful knowledge for many years. Some of my masters were great tyrants. I will mention one, as an instance. He was rich, but ignorant and vulgar. Often, to my astonishment, without any apparent cause, he would curse and damn our souls to h—l; the consequence was, the men in their

turn damned the souls of the horses, and I the cows. I relate these seemingly unimportant things to show how the poor man, instead of having it in his power to attend to the formation of character in his offspring, is compelled to part with them at an early age, with their pure and pliant minds to be manufactured and moulded at the will and caprice of interested strangers—to be made virtuous or vicious, intelligent or otherwise, according to those into whose hands they may happen to fall. To subject youth to harshness, and frequent unmerited abuse, is not only to crush and prevent the development of the best qualities of the mind but to arouse, and bring into activity, the worst passions of their nature. If the spirit is not broken, it will soon give symptoms of defiance, and imitate the oppressor. Sympathy is mutual, so is repulsion. Kind words to the young, the uncorrupted, will generally be found sufficient to ensure a ready obedience. Even a look of approbation or disapprobation will oftentimes have the desired effect. Undeserved insult from our superiors, I mean the rich, *may* be forgiven, but never forgot. I make these remarks not only in reference to what *I* suffered, but because the treatment of youth has a life-lasting influence. Millions of poor children are sent from the care of their parents with little, and frequently no schooling, to serve and see bad examples in a class who, in after years, will taunt them with their ignorance and vice; yet it is clear they cannot be otherwise than ignorant and vicious. They are merely what society makes them.

In my twelfth year, I commenced to learn the trade of shoemaking, with my father. At that time there was a great dearth in the country, and *we* felt it severely. Little does the proud aristocrat, whose step has never crossed the threshold of the honest poor man's dwelling, know of the anxiety and struggles within to bring up respectably a family of ten or more children. I will here give one instance of patient suffering. In Scotland, no legal claim for support can be made except by the aged and impotent, but at this time, through the kindness of some private gentlemen, coals, meal, and other things were given to those who *applied*.

My mother, though reduced to the greatest extremity to find her little ones in food, refused the proffered assistance, saying that 'Charity would bring a stigma on her children which would be spoken of to their shame when they were men and women.' The *swine*, the only butcher meat we ever had, on that occasion was sold to buy potatoes, and on potatoes with salt, a little melted fat, or a herring, we breakfasted, dined, and supped. Sometimes the supply of even that was so scanty that we eat our meals in secret to conceal the poverty. Yet on that fare my father worked hard, from five and six in the morning till ten or eleven at night, and prayed and thanked God with as much fervour as in times of better fortune.

At sixteen, with half-a-crown, a little bundle, and the benediction of my father and mother, I went forth to the world, to fight the battle of life on my own account. Walked thirty miles to a town, got employment by recommendation, and took my place where ten men were busy making boots and shoes. Except one (who, like the master, was an atheist) they were all very ignorant, and their language and conversation low. One delighted in poaching, another was a gravedigger, but (no quacks being there) his customers came in slowly, and he filled up his time at shoemaking. The atheist, my bedfellow, was studying phrenology. The gravedigger supplied him with skulls for manipulation, several of which, to my horror, were kept under our bed. They all drank whisky like fishes. I joined the atheist as a bass singer in the church choir, and with him I attended church regularly. He criticised the sermons with levity.\* The music teacher was a wit, a jolly fellow, used to set us in roars of laughter, made puns at the expense of religion, or anything else. Here, *I could not escape contamination*. In two years the master died, and I suppose I ought to state that it was said he *repented*. The atheist obtained a good situation in a spinning mill (like an old sailor, he left his *craft* to spin

\* This was the parish, or Old Abbey Church, in Dunfermline, where the Rev. Dr. Thos. Chalmers sometimes preached, and Dr. Chalmers less celebrated, was the principal minister there.

yarns). I mention this because he said it was *Providence* that *favoured him*.

Being now pretty well acquainted with my trade, I had sent to me to teach first one little brother, and by and by another, still less, respectively about ten and twelve years old, and who, like myself and thousands besides, had no choice but to submit to the necessity of passing our lives at an occupation to which we had a natural dislike. This is a disadvantage which the class above us are not subject to. The chance of contentment and success is certainly on the side of those who choose their own profession. With these little boys, and ere I had seen twenty summers, I resolved to go to some larger town, to get higher wages. The *town* was determined on, by setting up a stick, which, falling as we thought pointing to Glasgow, to Glasgow we went—a great town, with its 200,000 inhabitants, but every one was a stranger to us. Three days we wandered through the streets (staring at everything in and out of the windows), making fruitless applications for employment, during which time our meals chiefly consisted of a dry penny loaf each, which we ate in the street, washing it down with a drink at the pump. No work, nearly a hundred miles from home, perfectly unknown and friendless, with only a few shillings between us and destitution, our prospect was dark enough.

We *got* work, and the first week, (having learned by experience the value of time and money,) we worked night and day. On Saturday night, my little brother went to shop for our wages; he soon returned, bringing with him a pound-note. So large a sum we had not dared to hope for. Poor little fellow! tears of joy stood in his eyes as he handled the precious picture, saying, how it would astonish his mother. I have mentioned these things, though of an every-day kind, merely as a little specimen of the difficulties which working men have to encounter at the very dawn and vestibule of life's journey.

We had now to jostle with the cunning and the selfish. In great cities it is every one for himself. Glasgow, in appearance, is not inelegant, but it is swarming with public-houses, pawn-shops, prostitutes, and thieves. 'It is my

firm belief,' says a statistical observer, 'that penury, dirt, misery, drunkenness, disease, and crime, culminate in Glasgow to a pitch unparalleled in Great Britain.' That is *my firm belief* also. There are numerous spacious streets and squares, with public buildings, substantial and handsome. But, in the background, there are also streets of a different kind, so narrow, that one may stand in the centre and touch both sides: they are called *enteries, wynds, closes, and vennals*, giving shelter to hordes of miserable people, wonderfully prolific,—sending forth their squalid little children to become criminals, to be prosecuted and kept in bridewells, at a great expense to the industrious. It is in these streets that the shoemaker generally has to look for a home. To expect a high tone of morality prevalent in such places would be to expect the rays of the sun to illuminate the gloomy windings of a coal mine. Commodious dwellings, baths, and wash-houses, with *untaxed soap*, would do much for their improvement.

Here I became a member of a trades' union, and during a strike which then occurred, was called upon to contribute two shillings a week to its funds. The men, considering the prices which the masters got from the public, and knowing the cost of the material, &c., concluded they had a right to rather a better share of the profits arising from *their labour*. A general strike took place. The result was, the *men beat* the masters. I state this to show the declining position of our trade, as well as others. In such strikes we are not now successful, yet our wages are continually being reduced. One of the principal causes which I would assign for the diminution of wages, is the free introduction of foreign made-up goods, occasioning a ruinous competition. It is impossible that A. can long continue to get high prices, and pay good wages, while B., next door, is selling the same things at a price much lower, got up at half the wages. And between these selling rivals, the poor workman, who *produces* the articles in question, is squeezed to death. Besides, our trade is now overstocked with hands; schools and hospitals train them by hundreds.

In my twenty-second year, an affair of some importance

to me occurred. I shall relate it, not because it has affected all my subsequent life, but because it relates to that which, sooner or later, affects all men: and is, to working men especially, often the source of the purest happiness or the bitterest misery. Although fond of the company of woman, I had always shunned her, whose house, the Proverbs tells us, 'leadeth down to the chambers of death;' but, in avoiding one temptation, I fell into another. Being introduced to a young woman, whose appearance and behaviour interested me far beyond any other I had ever seen, I loved her. This gave direction to the mind, and an aim for ambition. It brought me back to my neglected and half-forgotten religious duties. I said, 'I will be wise.' I had high hopes; I resolved on great things!—visionary thoughts! Looking around me, on every side, I observed the married were wretched; seldom able to make the income of one week meet that of the next; the necessity of running with bundles to the pawn-shop with them was universal. I knew families who regularly kept their Sunday clothes there; taking them out on Saturday night, and pawning them again on Monday morning, paying interest from twenty to one hundred per cent. per annum. And in the numerous *unlicensed* pawn-shops, where small sums were borrowed, upwards of four hundred per cent. is charged. 'The destruction of the poor is their poverty.'

Seeing little prospects of much success in Glasgow, I went to Edinburgh, the aristocratic metropolis, said by some to be the most religious city in the world; but it was here I first met a society of atheists. In Edinburgh, there is much for the rich and well to do to be proud of. For picturesque appearance, and salubrity of situation, I suppose it can hardly be surpassed. But, like Glasgow, it has its streets of dirty old houses, *wynds*, and *closes*, with their corresponding ill-conditioned inhabitants. There are splendid terraces, and streets of palaces for the wealthy; but the working men who build, furnish, and decorate them, live in rooms piled one above another, six and eight stories high, without any decoration, and in some cases without much furniture. Wages were low, yet drunkenness prevailed to a

great extent. Here, as in Glasgow, I could see that married men with families had a desperate struggle for existence,—living from hand to mouth, frequently having to feed the pawn-shop before they could feed themselves. The question will naturally be asked, ‘If wages are so low, and the people so poor and destitute of the necessaries of life, how is it that drunkenness is so common? If they have *little*, why do they make that little less, by spending it on that which is not bread—on that which is worse than useless?’ To such questioner I would say. ‘You must look deeper than the mere surface of society, and inquire into the primary causes of such *effects*. That so much time and money should thus be wasted by the poor, will no doubt seem astonishing to the rich. But before they condemn us for the seeming anomaly, they ought to throw off *their education*, and all the influences of their superior training, and enter fairly into our circumstances. Instead of *their philosophy*, let them have *our ignorance*, and our prejudices only, and let us see how much superior they would be.

Man, like some of the lower animals, is of a gregarious nature. He delights to meet and converse with his fellow-man,—to enjoy the mutual pleasure of exchanging thoughts with his friends. This, the rich man can do; there is a choice of apartments in his house, of wines in his cellar, and of substantial things in his larder. The poor man cannot; there is no room for strangers in his house; nor can he spare anything from his cupboard; he must meet his friend in a *public* house, or live in isolation. It has been shown that in Edinburgh, when trade was good, and things generally prosperous, that drunkenness was not so common as in times of depression. It is frequently when the working-man is in the greatest distress, that he flies to the public-house. Anxious to escape from the sense of his own wretchedness, he finds there a temporary relief—not happiness; for even in the midst of his artificial gaiety, the cancer of grief will often be eating in his breast. Others, through pure ignorance, *imagine* that strong drinks are good to restore exhausted strength, and frequently indulge themselves accordingly. I will give an instance. Meeting a

fellow-workman one Monday evening, who had been *fuddling* all day (although *now*, I had sometimes been guilty of the same offence myself), I spoke to him of the impropriety of such behaviour; 'Oh! it's all very well,' he replied, 'but, last week, I worked like a horse, and I require something to keep up my strength.' That was a married man, and father of a numerous family. The intelligent man, who can get a *comfortable home*, will find little pleasure in the dram-shop.

In Edinburgh, though working for the best shops, employed chiefly by the aristocracy, I could earn no more than I did when working for the plebeians in the west. And, seeing the unenviable position of my married acquaintances, to whom, instead of being a blessing, children seemed a curse, I deemed it prudent to defer my resolves in that respect; for I had made arrangements to get married when I could earn a pound a week. That being far above the average wages there, I had to look to some other place where labour was better remunerated, before I could fulfil my promise, and adhere to the necessary, but self-imposed restriction. After passing there some profitless, but not unhappy years, I sailed for London, and though high in hopes of future success, it was with a heavy heart that I saw the monuments and romantic hills of Edinburgh disappearing in the north, as I progressed on the German ocean to the south. I had met with kind friends, and warm hearts there, and I left them with regret, to mingle again amongst strange faces in another metropolis.

In London the desideratum in wages was found; but here were many things to complain of. The extra pay was scarcely a compensation for the total absence of all domestic comfort. I was in what was considered a *good* lodging, and I know there are many worse. Four of us men worked and slept in one apartment, in a narrow court. The two large lamps which we worked by were seldom extinguished before ten, more often eleven and twelve at night. Sometimes one or two out of the four of us required to work *later*, and sometimes all night—the others snoring away in bed, breathing the foul air of our neces-



sarily dirty room, additionally vitiated by the smoke from the oily lamp burning all night long. The consequence was, we rose in the morning feeble and unrefreshed, to sit on our seats all day, to do the same thing, day after day, and night after night—from our seats to our beds, and from our beds to our seats. Let those who tell us that we are ignorant and immoral, place themselves in the same round of mill-horse labour, breathing the same atmosphere, and say whether there are no palliatives in our case when we *get* out, and sometimes go astray; and whether we are much to blame if we are ignorant, seeing how we are, without education, cast upon the world to scramble for an existence.

Bad as these things were, there were others which affected me a hundred times more—that was, the manner in which the masters treated the men. Woe to the poor working man on whom Nature may have bestowed a trifle of sensibility, if he falls into the hands of certain great masters in London. He will sometimes have to submit to more than the excoriating lash applied to the criminal. If he has brought with him any manly independence, it will increase his misfortune. If he has retained any of the ingenuousness of youth, he must forget it. He must surrender the one, and throw away the other. To the uninitiated it would be difficult to convey an idea of his dependent state.

In Edinburgh, some shops get prices equal to those in London that pay a third more wages; yet with the former taxes and rent are much lower than with the latter—showing that we might get higher wages in Edinburgh, without endangering the solvency of the employer. But, in lieu of this short-coming in cash, the masters there treat their men with civility, and sometimes kindness. It is not uncommon in Edinburgh for men to work twenty and thirty years for one shop; not so in London. Here, there is no consideration for past services. The man may have spent the best portion of his life in enriching his employer without being able to save anything for his own declining years, but the moment he ceases to be an equal competitor with his younger rival, he is without ceremony turned adrift.

And it were better by far for that man to seek a ready-made grave in the Thames or the ocean than go elsewhere, with a snowy-tinged whisker, begging for employment.

To doff the cap and bow the knee to men often more ignorant than ourselves are mere physical movements, and easily performed. I will give only one illustration of worse than that. Observe that poor fellow going into his shop for work. He takes his place (perhaps amongst several others) with his back to the wall, his empty bag in his hand: there, speechless and erect, like a dead man, he stands, until he thinks about the luxury of chairs; when, behold! a *gentleman* calls, for whose comfort, perhaps, this same man was working late last night; yet, as if his person was contagious, with mincing step, like a thief, he steals away, makes his escape to concealment, and there he waits, and peeps around the corner until he sees 'My Lord' come out; then he returns to his *upright*, but degraded position. Here I shall say no more, as I am not yet beyond their grasp.

Although by this time I had greatly relaxed in the religious discipline of my early days, still I had observed the Sabbath, and sometimes felt the 'small still voice' within, when I heard the tolling of the church bells. Nor had I ceased to make my secret and earnest supplications to God. But now I became rather a latitudinarian. Like the others, I was compelled to work on Sunday the same as on any other day of the week. This at first I did with reluctance, and afterwards by inclination. Working men in London generally cannot afford to keep the Sabbath; and if they desired so to do, they could not; they *must* work to orders.

I continued diligently at work, anxious to save a few pounds for a certain purpose; but from the difference in diet, the unhealthiness of the apartment, unnatural hours of labour, or some other (to me unknown) cause, I fell ill. Before that I never had headache in my life, now I became, for weeks, the day and night tenant of my bed—where all the others were busy at work, burning their lamps and smoking their pipes. I thought then of the healthy hills of Caledonia. During this cessation of labour my little

savings were melting rapidly away. On recovery, I determined to alter my position, and to enjoy domestic comfort if possible; to keep my word with my fair and warm-hearted betrothed in the north. But in that direction I had not written for years, considering it criminal to encourage and keep alive hopes which might never be realized: I wrote now—it was *too late!* We had parted for ever.

All my little schemes of hope and pride were gone. A terrible sense of loneliness, with depression of spirits, came over me, although I sought society and lived surrounded by millions. I thought it hard that *man* must suffer so much and enjoy so little; condemned to drag out a mean and *precarious* existence; to live, or rather vegetate, in crowded courts, in ill-aired unfurnished apartments; denied the enjoyments granted to the meanest insect. These communings were followed by a painful conflict between my earliest and latest lessons; the religious teachings of my parents, and the stern teachings of the world. I began to *doubt* the former, and to read the works of philosophers; to study the book of Nature, and to think for myself. It appeared to me that the Church and State were leagued together for selfish purposes; and with their united power to keep the people in mental and physical subjection. I was taught to believe that 'All things are fore-ordained, whatsoever comes to pass.' This is to blame the Almighty God for all the evils in society. My father and his generation may go down to the grave with these notions, but a new race has arisen; working men, seeing the fate of their fathers, and goaded by oppression, have burst the trammels of creeds, and dare to solve the problem for themselves. The calculating Malthusonians tell us, that for the general good of the community it is necessary for a large portion of its members (of course, the working men) to live in celibacy. To these sterile philosophers I would reply, if society finds it thus necessary to teach man to disregard and combat the strongest instincts which nature has given him, then there must be something corrupt and rotten in the constitution of that society. Reform must be necessary. The question then is, what kind of reform would *we* pro-

pose? Nearly all working men, especially in towns, are Chartists; and a great number believe the Charter to be the only panacea for our numerous ills. Others contend for Communism. The people, seeing they have little to expect from their government, see in Communism a system in which they can govern themselves. Both systems may be good; but the *time* for the realization of either the one or the other is not yet at hand; and in the meantime great numbers of the people are in destitution, and whose condition (without lessening any of their political claims) might be greatly alleviated by social reform.

A casual observer, walking through the principal streets in London, among the ceaseless driving and rattling of vehicles of all descriptions for trade and pleasure,—seeing the multitudes of generally well-dressed men and women, hurrying along in all directions, apparently on missions of business or enjoyment,—and witnessing in the tastefully arranged shop windows the gorgeous display of goods in endless variety, of the most costly texture and ingenious manufacture,—beholding everywhere around the appearance of wealth in exhaustless abundance, might be led to imagine that all things were prosperous here. But let him go into the back streets and courts, and ascend, and descend to the homes of the operative, who supply the shops with all those things which decorate their windows, and there he will find pictures as dark as the others are brilliant.

Having for many years lived among, and observed with attention the condition of the people in the principal cities of this country, I have found poverty, degradation, and suffering prevalent everywhere. The great complaint being WANT OF EMPLOYMENT, and of employments not being sufficiently remunerated, great numbers of the working classes seem steadily gravitating towards a lower and lower state. Having had little pleasure in the past, and less hope for the future, many lose character and self-respect, and sink into the cold apathy of despair. Others, more intelligent and energetic, are nursing, and spreading assiduously the spirit of discontent.

Finding my own efforts at advancement ineffectual, I

live with some thoughtful application endeavoured to discover the cause of all this misery and wretchedness—this incubus that is crushing the industrious to the earth. I find many causes. Class legislation I conceive to be one of the principal. Working men have no influence, or participation in the legislature of the country. Their interests in parliament are almost wholly unrepresented. Government being entirely composed of men who neither belong to, nor are sent by, the working-classes—of men who never mingle among us to know our wants or our wishes. That body being nothing more than the reflex of the landed gentry, of the aristocracy, of rich merchants and mill-owners, whose own interests (which are in opposition to ours), are uniformly the chief subjects of their consideration. They make laws, and impose taxes, which we, without any power of appeal, are forced to comply with. The taxes levied on the industry of this country are higher than those demanded in the most despotic states on the face of the earth. All interests ought to be equally represented, and government ought to protect all classes of society with impartiality; it ought also to harmonize with the wishes of the majority of the people. With us such is not the case, and the people have a right to complain. In London, above all other places where I have been, the greatest extremes of wealth and poverty are to be met. Here many thousands of well-disposed men can only obtain partial employment; others, often, and for long periods, are wholly unemployed. And in times of even slight commercial depression, many additional thousands are reduced to the greatest poverty and distress. Here, I saw the oppressed, the unrepresented people, rise in their tens and hundreds of thousands, to talk of their wrongs, to present respectfully their humble petition to government, praying for redress of grievances. Government ordered them to disperse, and treated their petition with contempt. The people quietly returned to their homes—their attics and their cellars. For them, in that direction, there was nothing now to hope. They had no friends there. Even the middle classes, the people's greatest oppressors, rose also against them with all

the pomp and circumstance of war, the government, at an expense of hundreds of pounds, supplying them with sticks to break the people's heads. There is no harmony here. Every class that has anything rises to oppose that class which has nothing. Thus, we are kept down, with scarcely a possibility of rising. It is impossible, however, that government can, with impunity, long bid defiance to the legitimate demands of an intelligent people. But it is possible that an unenlightened people may demand measures, not only subversive of order, but injurious to themselves. Working men are not all intelligent; far from it. I know they are not so. And for that reason, although a Chartist, I would not demand the Charter all at once; nor would I at this time insist on Universal Suffrage. Universal Suffrage, without some previous universal education, would, I believe, lead to some confusion. The balance of power would be completely changed, and in the choosing of representatives, discrimination, in the ignorant and hungry, is not to be expected. From the intelligent man there is little to fear; he seeks not the destruction of existing institutions, but their improvement. He knows that some kind of a government is necessary to enforce laws for order; to ensure personal liberty, and to give security to property, public and private; otherwise, national greatness and private enterprise would cease, there being no incentive to industry; man would labour only to supply immediate wants; considering it useless to do more, if the surplus were not to be his own. It is the ignorant man that is dangerous, and a continual clog on the wheels of progress. Being completely in the hands of the demagogue, he is always ready to make war on society. It is painful to meet so many working men of this description. I will give one illustration (of a man of my own acquaintance) at once ludicrous and pitiable. He has a wife and family, is an excellent workman, and a Chartist. During the late agitations, he was exceedingly violent; his chief arguments were pikes and guns, to stab and shoot our bloody enemies. Shortly before this, a fellow-workman undertook to teach him to read. He persevered until he had nearly mastered the

alphabet of capitals; but when put forward to the single letters and italics, he began to despair of success. 'I think,' he said, 'I might manage the big 'uns, but, I'm blow'd if the little 'uns aint gallows hard!'

If all men were intelligent, and inclined to 'do unto others as they would have others do unto them,' there would scarcely be any necessity for a government. To expect such a state of things may be Utopian. Nevertheless, by elevating the masses by knowledge, it is possible to make nearer approaches to it than have ever yet been made.

It appears to me, then, that it is the duty of government, as well for the peace and prosperity of the state, as in justice towards the people, to abolish the taxes on knowledge, and to establish a system of *national education*. Universal suffrage *will* be demanded by ceaseless and increasing agitation, until it is obtained. And it will be the fault of those in power if the people are not somewhat instructed previous to its introduction. That the suffrage at the present time might, with all safety, be greatly extended, few can have any doubt. There are great numbers of working-men far more intelligent, and far more honest, than many of those who are now in the exercise of the franchise. Recent exposures have shown that, in the present system, shamefully dishonest practices are common, both on the part of constituents and candidates, which call for immediate reform.

Thus, the want of a fair representation in the House of Commons is our principal grievance. The obtaining of this right, would, we believe, give us the power of correcting all other grievances.

Of the Church, working men have much to complain. It is not only fast losing its influence, by its abuses, alienating the affections of thinking men, but it is fast filling the land with infidels. Yet, while many, from a sort of reaction, are thus becoming sceptics, there are others, who occupy a higher ground, and are, with the purest motives, freethinkers from conviction. And among these, are men of great probity—of first-rate ability—linguists and logicians, whose arguments are no longer confined to mere negation, but are associated with utility and progress,—men, whose

great influence over the most advanced portion of the people can scarcely be a secret to the better paid, but less active teachers in higher quarters. The ministers of the Gospel generally, instead of being the champions, and defenders of the unrepresented—the down-trodden children of God, are invariably among the first to oppose and denounce all their efforts at bettering their condition, by obtaining their political rights. There are honourable exceptions (which I know from personal knowledge) among the working—the really useful clergymen; but the great bishops—the lords spiritual, whom we are beginning to think we might do perfectly well without—they live not in accordance with the spirit of Christianity. These men annually absorb enormous sums of money from industry, without giving in return (as working men think) any perceivable equivalent. Yet thousands of their fellow creatures are existing around each of them, as ignorant and vicious, but worse fed, and in every sense worse off, than the carnivorous brutes of the forest. Those of us who can read the New Testament know that this is *not Christianity*. It is a mockery, and the minds of honest working men rebel against it. ‘Thou shalt teach not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind,’ saith the Scripture. The unseemly, but not unfrequent seizures for church-rates, with returns of incomes, &c., show how this command is observed. The law may convert a man’s goods to the church, but not his conscience. If half the incomes of the bishops were distributed among the underpaid, and *really Christian* clergymen, and on additional school-masters, it might be the means of raising, annually, hundreds and thousands of our fellow men from beastly ignorance and depravity, to be intelligent and useful members of society.

While wealth and knowledge are continually accumulating on the one hand, poverty and ignorance are increasing on the other. Thus society is divided and antagonistic,—one portion being always at war with the other. Poverty believes it sees an enemy in the rich, and the rich seem to have little sympathy with poverty. It is said, ‘there have always been rich and poor; and, from the nature of things, such must always be.’ To a certain extent (except in Com-



munism,) this must ever be the case. But, can nothing be done to lessen the extremes? We know that the capacities and capabilities of men are unequal; and that those of superior endowments are more likely to rise to higher positions in society, and to accumulate wealth, than those of their brethren to whom nature has been less kind. But, apart from natural abilities, have we all the same means of self-advancement? Certainly not. The great mass of the people are destitute of the very rudiments of knowledge. But the rich have the advantage of the experience and accumulated knowledge of ages. We see that knowledge always holds ignorance in subjection and slavery; and hence the consequent train of degradation and misery.

We see that the poor, from *want of employment*, and want of knowledge, cannot elevate themselves. The rich generally stand aloof; living in a sphere so remote, they are precluded from a thorough knowledge of our case. Their sympathy is useless—their charity sometimes injurious. The class between the benevolent rich and the poor, though with better opportunities of knowing our wants, generally treat us with contempt, and sneeringly say, ‘You are improvident spendthrifts. Why do you not do so and so? Your poverty is your own fault.’ Speaking thus, in my opinion, to say the least of it, is betraying a limited knowledge of the human character, and of the force of habit. No one lives in wretched penury from choice. All would like to be well fed and clothed, and to have a house with comfortable furniture, instead of living almost naked, hungry, and houseless. Yet we admit there are great numbers of working men who are degraded, and suffer severe privations, not so much from absolute poverty as from bad habits—a want of foresight and self-respect. But when people are long treated like brutes, they become almost as such. We might almost as reasonably expect a block of marble to assume of itself the form and polish of a statue, as to look for self-control, abstemiousness, and high notions, moral duties, in a class who have been surrounded by the worst of circumstances all the days of their lives. There is little room for the delicate germs of modesty and virtue to thrive

in the young breasts of either sex, where ignorance and vice have the possession of the parents. Give them knowledge, improve their dwellings, teach them their social duties, and self-respect, self-reliance, and honest pride will follow. Promote extensive emigration, to draw off the surplus labour; open the museums and zoological gardens on the Sunday afternoons, to draw them from the beer-shops, and all things will go on in quiet equilibrium. We ask not deep learning; not theoretical abstractions; not metaphysical subtleties; but practical knowledge of actual realities.

To meet the exigency of the times, and the desires of the people, large and comprehensive measures of political reform are certainly required. But there are many things required which government cannot give, and many reforms of a social nature which might be accomplished without asking government for. There are some *patriots* who affect to despise all attempts at reform, unless it embrace radical and universal principles. This is like refusing our hand to a drowning mariner, because by the same action the whole ship's-crew cannot be saved; or, like philanthropy refusing assistance to the fallen soldier, saying 'It is no use doctoring you up, your sufferings are merely the result of a bad system, which we must try to put a stop to.'

But, while we desire to save all, let us not neglect those within our reach—while we attempt to alter misery-producing systems, let us not imagine our labours useless in attempting, by social reform, to relieve some of its present victims.

Working men, individually, are comparatively powerless; but, by association, they might accomplish many desirable things. It cannot be said that they have no desire to better their condition; many plans have been proposed for their redemption, which they have supported with the greatest readiness; but their expectations have generally been doomed to disappointment. Towards schemes for their amelioration which bore to them the appearance of practicability, and with confidence in the managers—they have in a short period subscribed their pence to the amount of hundreds of thousands of pounds, but still without success.

By association they are enabled to assist one another in sickness, and are enabled to perform the last duties to the dead with honour and respectability. Associations for the protection of labour have also been formed with success. Associations, with the assistance and encouragement of the rich and benevolent, might, with benefit, be greatly extended. I have one case to propose. When a working man, unconnected with a club, requires medical aid, unable to pay a physician, he frequently applies to the chemist, and pays dearly for drugs which may not suit the complaint. There are plenty of charity hospitals, but he goes there with great reluctance: charity is humiliating; besides, if he is still able to attend work, he loses much valuable time, having to wait generally for some hours. If he is unable to leave his bed, he has some difficulty in getting a physician to come to his house. To avoid all this, I would propose a system, called *Provident Dispensaries*, which has been successfully introduced in other towns, and which enables working men, for the small sum of one penny per week each, to obtain medical advice and medicine, without being reduced to the necessity of asking charity. If this be deemed worthy of notice, I shall be happy to supply the details of the system afterwards.

I conclude with the hope that the condition of working men (which is now attracting much notice) may soon be greatly improved.

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### III.

[THE first effusion of my pen I dedicate to humanity: my first Essay her sons and daughters will deal leniently with, when I inform them I am only a poor operative.

GEORGE SMITH.]

#### RELIGION.

MY opinions on religion are, that all religions are incorrect; that man is the creature of necessity; that man, being an effect, springing from a cause, he can never

know the source from whence he came. The machine does not know the machinist that made it, neither can I know the cause that created me. You may reply, that the machine is inanimate, and man is an intellectual being. True; but you have forgot that the premises you build your hypothesis on might be wrong; you have yet to demonstrate that intellect is creative. You might fill volumes with the achievements of intellect, but could you show me an atom destroyed, or an atom created? The intermediate causes that have led to the development of the human mind were all created; they were effects, man has only discovered, applied, and arranged what was made. If you are unable to show that intellect is creative, then how can a non-creative judge of a creative? Has it never occurred to your mind that there might be something superior to intellect; in a word, might there not be as great a difference between man and this Creator or power as there is between the machine and man? Would it be rational to suppose that an inferior animal could form an estimate of man's character? No, certainly not; man is superior; a lower link of existence cannot judge of a higher one; an inferior cannot judge of a superior. Analogy, inference, or deduction is necessary to discover effects, but powerless to grasp infinity. You may reply, God has communicated with us, his children, through the medium of his holy prophets; he has sent his Son to save us. Let us examine the probability of such an occurrence. Oh! presumptuous man, has your mind never dreamed of the immeasurable distance that separates you from the Infinite. Pitiab! animalculæ, your religions, when examined, destroy themselves by their own absurdity. The heaven of the Mahometans is the offspring of sensuality—the heaven of the Christians is the offspring of selfishness, of avarice. Examine the description of the Christian's heaven: this Elysium he struggles for—streets paved with gold, precious stones shine and glitter on every garment that envelopes the saints. To be brief, it would take a Jew pedlar half an eternity to describe this receptacle of avarice. Imagination has lent her wings to Selfishness; she has filled her Elysium with the things she loved on

earth, the departed spirits sing praises to the Omnipotent for this display for ever and ever. Oh, how beautiful. The worshippers of Mahomet struggle and pray for the gratification of their sensual passions eternalized. This is their Elysium. All other religions have some affinity to these; they are all the offspring of we poor humans. My opinion is that all religions have emanated from the instinctive feelings of humanity. Progress distinguishes man from all other beings; it is the divinity that stirs within him. Man, in his infant state, saw the manifestations of the Omnipotent in the phenomena he could not understand. Intellect has discovered the causes; man no longer wonders; past and present religions have only been the passions and feelings of humanity magnified by the microscope of imagination; they enthroned these, and called it God, or Gød's. The idea of a Saviour or mediator is universal—it belongs to humanity; all people—all nations—in their primitive state expressed this idea, it was the instinctive emanation of humanity, the shadow of the ultimate triumph of good.

Intellect has taught the sublimity and awful grandeur of the Infinite; man has found his own insignificance; dare he give a local habitation to this great first cause? No, it is Infinity, it is eternity. All religions have some analogical truths contained in them; the authors who impressed those analogical truths on society have likewise given us their local history. Intellect must sever these from the shadows of our future destiny. I said that man was progressive. Yes, progression is the finger of the divinity pointing to our future destiny. Eternity stands between man and the Omnipotent. I will elaborate my ideas on religion at a future time.

#### EDUCATION.

EDUCATION is the progressive lever that elevates society. Life is so many progressive efforts towards the realization of its future destiny. Life is a principle coexistent with the Divinity: it never dies, it only assumes new forms and different conditions. Education is a knowledge of effects—it is Progression painting the shadows of the Divinity on

the intellect of Humanity. The farmer is instructed in chemical science, to enable him to fertilize the land, in a word, to make it more productive. The political economists calculate the laws of supply and demand; capital and labour command their attention and research. The painter admires a beautiful painting, the sculptor a beautiful piece of sculpture, the horticulturist the beautiful flowers his labour and ingenuity have reared: but the flowers of humanity, that rear their tender heads in the gardens of poverty, are allowed to perish, without scarcely an effort. Is there no one who will come forward and tell society the loss it sustains by ignorance? the aggregate amount of intellectual wealth that is allowed to run down the common sewers of ignorance? the amount of material wealth that is required to keep crime in subjection—crime, the offspring of injustice and ignorance? What an army of assailants society keeps to attack crime. Constables, lawyers, judges, and hangmen; staves, wigs, and hemp. The policeman uses his staff when the victim of crime shows resistance; the lawyer makes his brief for or against, according to the side the money is on; the judge dons his wig to look learned before poor crime; they call each other ‘My learned friend,’ to impress society with the idea of their importance, the same as the M.P.’s call themselves ‘Honourables,’ that we might be induced to rely upon their honour. Look at society, and see what these learned and honourable friends have done. The M.P.’s make the laws that they inflict on society: the lawyers enforce them, with the help of their cunning and jargon; these human spiders, that catch the flies of crime, they live on the blood of society—that is, its wealth. Lawyers grow fat on crime, they are the human insects that thrive on putridity: see jails, penitentiaries, silent systems, tread-mills, law courts of all sizes, all degrees, Jack Ketch standing in the rear, to put the extinguisher on some poor human. The lawyer points to this mighty engine, as he pompously calls it. Education and justice would rid us of these gentlemen; we must have education to diminish crime, and justice will destroy how many lives on the ignorance and credulity of man; time is the mirror that will reflect the

answer. Man does not understand education in its true sense, he is only burnishing the reflective faculties of man for the coming conflict. Evil does, will, and shall exist; good does, will, and shall exist. These are two eternal principles: the man who combats evil in any phase or form, I call good or moral; society is benefitted individually and collectively by his efforts. Look at the aspect of society; see murder sanctified by nations, they call it war. Wholesale plunder and spoliation they call civilizing the heathen! they feed industry upon the crumbs that fall from her own table. What whitened sepulchres! Man must be taught to fight the dragon of evil; he is not yet armed with the lance of truth; the world is the workshop, the accumulated facts of mankind are the tools requisite to form it; controversy is the blast-furnace for the fire of thought; justice the anvil, on it must the lance of truth be forged. Who is this moral champion that will teach humanity to combat evil? It is education. It will seem strange that I should speak of combating evil, when my belief is that evil will always exist; day and night are the analogical types of good and evil, yet that does not deter us from lighting our homes or streets. Night still bears its name; we have deprived it of its sting, we have mitigated the severity—let us light the streets of human ignorance with the lamps of thought. Evil is the eternal rock that mental industry must strike the sparks of progress from to guide us on our way to happiness; progress will lead us to the well of universal charity, there we shall find truth. Then the physical, intellectual, and moral attributes of man will be developed, the last shall be first, and the first last; man, subdued by his moral attribute, the conqueror of the avoidable evils of humanity.

GEORGE SMITH.

#### PROPERTY.

PROPERTY is the accumulation of industry. Labour is the source of wealth. Indolence has taken possession of the inheritance of industry.

It is necessary when we examine what property calls its rights, that we should rely on our reason. Property talks

of its rights: so do I; they think they have all the right; I think they have none. I shall endeavour to put a spark of vitality in this assertion. My maxims are self-dependence; rely upon your own reason—judge, and draw your own conclusions. The man of property presents his dusty parchments and title-deeds. ‘Look here!’ he says to Industry, ‘these are proofs of my right.’ The sound of the voice of Property startles Industry. She speaks; the world has truly changed. What has brought property to endeavour to convince me of his rightful claim; the chill air of want awakes her to a sense of her condition: the mirror of wretchedness reflects her form. She discovers that rags and filth cover her attenuated reflection. Thoughts half-formed, visions indistinct, float o’er the bewildered brain of Industry; her imagination on fire lights the torch of thought; the gods smile; Industry reasons. Property speaks of his title-deeds; he has accumulated the industry of others: he has made laws to protect, soldiers to guard; there must be something wrong in these so-called rights, when he requires force to protect. Right would be its own protector. Indolence has taken possession; she requires force to retain her usurpation. Indolence and Industry meet: they appeal to justice. Let us examine the rights of those disputants. I have the claims of the rich, or their assertions. Look at these vast mountains of parchments and of title-deeds. Industry essays to speak; her voice is tremulous. Justice pities. Speak out, my child. She speaks. The rich or indolent have shown you their parchments and title-deeds. I have none of those to show.

Last night, (a long and weary night for Industry) worn out with fatigue and exertion, my head was laid on its hard and lonely pillow; unconsciousness stole o’er me; I was asleep. A beautiful being appeared to me; her face was radiant with smiles; the benevolent expression of her features dispelled my fears; I raised myself that my eyes might embrace her; she smiled—I was enchanted. She pointed with her wand to the material wealth of the world: ‘See yonder vast heaps, they are the accumulations of Industry; those gaudy creatures are the offspring of Indolence: they have taken possession of your inheritance.’



I smiled; she reproved me. I replied, 'Oh, Genius! society has taught me that you creatures were the rightful owners. 'The gods willed that you should be in a state of ignorance.' If you had been alive to your degradation, the blessings you will derive would never have been elaborated. All blessings are struck from the rock of evil, labour is essential to happiness; your physical structure proclaims it,—the effects that surround you are so many incentives to labour,—they are the material from which Industry extracts the honey to sweeten the cup of life. Indolence has paid for her usurpation: those sweets she drinks, are only apparent, not real, although glittering in all that splendour; it only conceals her deformity: wealth corrodes and destroys her happiness. Humanity has knelt before this idol of its own creation: the pen and sword she has used to raise the barriers to resist the advance of right; the sycophants who served her are rewarded from the stores of industry.

'Fear not; your title-deeds come from the Omnipotent. Tell her that wrong is wrong, and right is right; that no time nor conditions can subvert right—it is indestructible. Ask her to show you in all creation, social or material, benefits conferred without exertion. If she cannot, point to the wealth she has usurped, demand how non-exertion can claim the legitimate reward of exertion or of labour; tell her the rights of property are to secure the maintenance of all who exert themselves; its duties, to support those who are unable through physical or mental incapacity.'

She raised her wand, and pointed to the east. 'See yonder star, 'tis the herald of the coming day, the SUN OF TRUTH SHALL CHASE AWAY THE MISTS OF IGNORANCE.' A thought scarce formed excited me. She divined my wish. She replied, 'I am Universal Charity, the mother of Truth.' The emotions I felt at her departure awakened me. She had uttered words of hope. I raised my eyes: Justice had disappeared; Hope's fond anticipations were dashed on the rocks of disappointment.

I stood appalled, when a voice said, 'Fear not: Charity has given her mantle to Justice to judge Humanity!'

GEORGE SMITH.

# 'HOME IS HOME, BE IT NEVER SO HOMELY.'

BY HENRY MAYHEW, ESQ.

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THIS is one of the many foolish sayings which pass current as 'wise saws,'—a bit of tinkling brass with a glittering wash—a worthless 'token' from some Brummagem mint, that good easy men accept as sterling truth, because it has something of a ring and sparkle with it. Your 'old saws' generally, indeed, are none of the sharpest instruments—and require a deal of re-setting to render them in any way serviceable; but of all the blunt, toothless, and bad-tempered things which have been handed down as heir-looms in the human family, there is none perhaps so thoroughly worn out, and unfitted for the work of the present day, as that which has been adopted for the subject of this contribution.

To comprehend this, we must first understand definitely what we mean by the word *home*. Etymologically considered, the term expresses simply a place of shelter. The Saxon root *Ham*, from which our word is directly derived, signifies a mere *covering*, and, consequently, stands for not only a *roof* to protect us from the elements, but a *skin*, a *coat*, or, indeed, anything that answers the same purpose. The same root exists in our word, *yellow-hammer*, literally, the bird with the yellow covering; and *hammer-cloth*, the cloth which covers the box of a carriage. The Latin *Cam-isia* is a cognate term, though one would hardly think that there could be any point of resemblance between a house and a shirt; and yet, assuredly, the bricken and the linen case do us each a similar service, so that we may be said to be, as it were, etymological snails, carrying our homes on our backs.

The original idea, then, attached to the term home, appears to have been merely that of shelter, or protection from the weather and foes. Probably the first homes were caves or hollow trees—mere holes, into which to thrust and screen the body from the winds and animals. The Welsh adjective *cau*, which means hollow, and is the original of the Latin *cav-us*, and our *cave*, means, also, *shut up—enclosed*, while the verb *cau* signifies *to fence in—to cover*. This is closely connected with the Celtic *cab-in*, and the Teutonic *hov-el*;\* so that, look which way we will, we find that the fundamental signification of home is that of a *covering*, or place of *shelter*.†

But though this may have been the primitive sense of the word, assuredly it is not the signification which we now attach to it.

Home is with us something more than an hotel or an hospital, an archway, an umbrella, or a Macintosh; each and all of which serve the purposes of covering and protection. The dry arches of Waterloo-bridge, or, more properly speaking, of the Adelphi, afford a nightly shelter from the winds and rain to many a houseless wretch; and yet which among the number who herd there would think of speaking of such a place as his home?

The Refuges for the Destitute are crowded, in the winter time, with the 'vagabonds of all nations'—a kind of Beggars' Congress from every quarter of the world; for your true rogue returns to town for the winter as regularly as your nobleman or person 'of quality,'—the pleasure of 'shaking a loose leg,' (as those who prefer a 'roving life' term vagrancy) lasting only so long as the thermometer ranges above 40°, and it is possible, in case of an emergency, to 'skipper it,' that is to say, to sleep in the open fields. But never was one of the many thousands who avail themselves of the gratuitous warmth and leathern coverlets of the Nightly Refuges heard, except in bitter jest at his own destitution, to speak of the 'straw-yard' as his home.

\* The Saxon *hof* is a house, a dwelling; *cave*, den.

† The words *house* and *hut* have a similar origin. These are philological cognates, being both derived from the old German, *hüten*, to cover, protect; whence the Anglo-Saxon *hydan*, and English *hide*.

Home, then, with us, stands for a very different idea from that which was originally associated with it,—and this doubtlessly has been a necessity of the altered circumstances of the race inventing and still using the term. The Saxons were not always the inhabitants of a cold or variable climate. The most probable history derives them from the Axoni, who dwelt on the banks of the Euxine Sea ; and it is certain that in all warm countries, the desire and the necessity for a home, in the true English meaning of the word, is not felt so acutely as it is in less genial climates. In Italy and France the people pass the greater part of their time in the open air ; they are *al fresco* races—out-of-door nations—living in the sunshine—and having mere dormitories rather than homes to retire to for the night. In this country, however, where there are 178 wet days out of the 365 ; and the quantity of rain that falls in the metropolis in the course of the year is just up to ones knees\* (twenty-four inches per annum is the average of twenty-seven years),—where one-fifth of the winds that blow are north-easterly—where, for three months out of every twelve, the thermometer ranges below 40°, and for another three months below 50°,—where the domestic consumption of fuel is estimated at one ton per head, man, woman, and child (London alone consuming, for all purposes, not less than three-and-a-half millions of tons in the course of the twelvemonth)—in this country, I say, where the people pass at least seven-eighths of their time within doors, it is but natural that the word home should have extended itself into something more than a mere covering—a bricken case for our bodies (like the Italian *casa*). Accordingly we find many other ideas have grown to be associated with the term, so that it now expresses a place not only of shelter, but of ease, of peace, of comfort, and endearment—with us.

I cannot say which of the latter ideas enter most fully or essentially into the complex notion ; but perhaps the Englishman's home is more particularly dear to him, as

\* The gross amount of the rain-fall in London, according to the Registrar General's limits, may be estimated, in round numbers, at 36,500 million gallons, or an average of 100,000,000 gallons per diem.

being the focus of his affections—the abiding place of his family. It is true, we hear much of an Englishman's fire-side, but I doubt whether the comfort of our sea-coal fires enters so thoroughly into the essence of an English home, as does that of its being the spot where all that is dearest and nearest to the individual are concentrated. Assuredly, the home of the bachelor must be very different from that of the Benedict—as different as the lair is from the nest. With even the middle classes, the single man's abiding place is generally a *lodging*—often only a *bed*—and consequently reverts to the primitive sense of the term. Ease and comfort appear, however, to be absolutely essential to complete the English idea of home. I doubt whether the titled and fashionable classes are imbued with that full home feeling which belongs to the middle and many of the humbler folk of this country. Among those who are not compelled to labour for their living, there is a less enjoyment of the ease of home; and, consequently, a greater love of society than is found among those who return to it after a heavy day's work: and it is probably the irksomeness of mere domesticity, to such as are unable to enjoy the ease with which they are surfeited, even to *ennui*, that induces that love of social display, which distinguishes the richer from the poorer classes of this country.

But if the idea of ease be essentially connected with the English notion of home, certainly that of comfort forms a special part of it. The word 'home,' in the real English sense, is not more peculiar to the language, than is the word 'comfort' itself. The French people have no terms in their vocabulary to express either notion. The adjective *comfortable*, they have been obliged to borrow to the letter from us, and as for their phrases *à la maison* and *chez nous*, they stand for mere eating and sleeping places.

There is a vast deal of philosophy in words, rightly considered; and there is not, perhaps, a more apt type of the peculiar domestic turn of an Englishman's mind, than in the invention of that most characteristic and expressive word *comfort*. How difficult is it to analyze all the many feelings, negative and positive, which enter into that one

term!—the utter freedom from all the petty disagreeablenesses and uneasinesses of life—the enjoyment of several of those minor pleasures of which our nature is susceptible. And yet it is strange that the ancient Saxons should have had no word to express any such feeling—which plainly shows that they were strangers to the feeling itself. But when we come to compare the mode of living in this country in even the Middle Ages (the days of horn windows and ‘reredosses’ instead of chimneys) with that of the present time, it is evident that a sense of comfort is comparatively a modern development, and the word, therefore, one of recent invention, even with ourselves. Indeed, the existence of the term, and consequently of the sense itself, may be cited in proof of a high order of civilization on the part of our people; for if the dwelling in cities, and the development of that particular manner, respectful of a neighbour’s feelings, which we term civility or politeness, be the essential distinction between the civilized man and the savage, certainly the dwelling in houses of a particular kind, possessed of greater conveniences, where all the requirements of a keener sense of decency, and a greater love of cleanliness and order may be observed—all of which are but so many proofs of the development of the sense of comfort in a nation—certainly these may be cited as infallible signs of a still higher order of civilization and refinement—of that respect for all those minor graces, and sentiments, and affections, which add so much to the charm of life, and the happiness of the people.

Home, then, to an Englishman’s mind, is a place not alone of shelter, but of ease, of comfort, and affection. The English, and indeed Saxon, law has always regarded a man’s home as a place of special sanctity. The old word *hamsoen* meant simply ‘protection from assault in one’s house’—*domūs immunitas*; and the German cognate formerly signified ‘burglary and any violence or injury done to the owner of the house or its inmates.’ The maxim that an ‘Englishman’s home is his castle,’ though partaking too much of the warlike spirit of ancient times to agree with the more peaceful character of the present age, and making

that a fortress and a stronghold against enemies which is now rather a place of quietude and the abode of friends, still shows that the dwelling of the family has ever been considered in this country as a kind of social sanctuary—a spot sacred to peace and goodwill, where love alone is to rule, and harmony to prevail, and whence every enemy is to be excluded by the strong arm of the law itself.

But if this be the archetype of the English idea of home, if it be essentially a place of special security, of ease, of peace, of comfort, and of affection, how can the dwellings of the poor possibly be homes to them when the majority hardly admit of the fulfilment of any one of these conditions; that is to say, when they are so very *homely* as to allow neither ease, peace, comfort, and hardly affection to be enjoyed in them? Those who have never known the want of a comfortable dwelling-place, and who have never contrasted the snugness of their own residence with the wretchedness of those of their less lucky brethren, may perhaps find it difficult to regard home even in its homeliest form but as a place whence all the cares and jealousies of life are excluded, where, let the world frown as it may, happy, smiling faces, and kindly voices are always ready to welcome them; where the honest love of children yields a rich compensation for the hollow friendship of men, and where the gracious trustfulness and honied consolation of woman, makes ample atonement for the petty suspicions and heartlessness of strangers,—to such, I say, who have never known other than this, and who lack the imagination to conceive how a fireless grate—an empty cupboard—children peevish with hunger—wife weak, disconsolate, and querulous with long-suffering, can strip a dwelling-place of all the charms it borrows from affection and peace; how one small close room for all to sleep in, where each drinks in, the long night through, the breath of the others, can rob it even of its rest, and how the absence of the commonest requirements of decency, cleanliness, and even shelter—how the leaky roof, broken windows, damp walls, reeking drains, and wet clothes hung to dry on a string across the one apartment which has to serve as kitchen, nursery, workshop, wash-

house, bed-room, coal-cellar, sitting room, larder, and all—can divest it of every touch of comfort, and so render it literally no home at all.

‘But are there really such places?’ the innocent and sceptical Well-to-do will ask. ‘It is not to be expected,’ they will say, ‘that the poor should be able to indulge in the luxury of double windows and doors; that their beds should be of goose-down, or their coverlets of eider-down; that hot and cold baths should be attached to their apartments: but surely this want of the commonest requirements of decency and cleanliness, the absence even of protection from the elements, is a stretch of the truth to its utmost limits.’

Assuredly it is not; and to convince you, Reader, of the fact, you shall, if you will, while you sit beside your snug sea-coal fire, in your cosy easy-chair, make a short tour with me to some few of the houses that I have seen during now two years inquiries into the condition of the humbler classes of the metropolis. You shall see them as I saw them, and as if you looked at them with your own eyes, in all their naked truth; some sketched by myself from notes taken on the spot, and others, painted far more vividly, by the owners of them, as I sat in their miserable homes, questioning them on their mode of life and merely reporting their replies. The first we will visit is—

#### THE SILK WEAVER’S HOME.

It was growing late one night during my inquiry into the state of the Spitalfields weavers, but as I was anxious to see some case of destitution in the trade, which might be taken as a fair average of the state of the second or third-rate workman, I requested my guide, before I quitted the district, to conduct me to some such individual, if one could be found at that hour. He took me towards Shoreditch, and on reaching a narrow back street, he stood opposite a three-storied house to see whether there was still a light shining through the weaver’s long window in the attic. By the flickering shadows the lamp within seemed to be dying out. My companion thought, however, that we might venture to



knock. We did so, and in the silent street the noise echoed from house to house. But no one came. We knocked again, still louder. A third time, and louder still, we clattered at the door. A voice from the cellar demanded to know whom we wanted. He told us to lift the latch of the street door. We did so—and it opened. The passage looked almost solid in the darkness. My guide groped his way by the wall to the staircase, bidding me follow him. I did so, and reached the stairs. ‘Keep away from the banisters,’ said my companion, ‘as they are rather rotten, and might give way.’ I clung close to the wall, and we groped our way to the second floor, where a light shone through the closed door in luminous chinks. At last we gained the top room, and knocking, were told to enter.

‘Oh, Jem, is that you?’ said an old man, sitting up, and looking out from between the curtains of a turn-up bedstead. ‘Here, Tilly,’ he continued, to a girl who was still dressed, ‘get another lamp, and hang it up again the loom, and give the gentleman a chair.’

A backless seat was placed at the foot of the old weaver’s bedstead; and when the fresh lamp was lighted, I never beheld so strange a scene. In the room were three large looms. From the head of the old weaver’s bed a clothes line ran to a loom opposite, and on it were a few old ragged shirts and petticoats, hanging to dry. Under the ‘porry’ of another loom, was stretched a second clothes line, and more linen drying. Behind me, on the floor, was spread a bed, on which lay four boys, two with their heads in one direction and two in another, for the more convenient stowage of the number. They were covered with old sacks and coats. Beside the bed of the old man was a mattress on the ground, without any covering.

‘Oh, Jem, I am so glad to see you,’ said the old weaver, to my companion. ‘I’ve been dreadful bad, nearly dead with the cholera. I was took dreadful about one o’clock in the morning; just the time the good ’ooman down below were taken. What agony I suffered, to be sure! I hope to God you may never have it. I’ve known four hundred die about here in fourteen days. I couldn’t work! And how I

lived, I can't tell. To tell you the real truth, I wanted, such as I never ought to want—why, I wanted for common necessities. There's seven on us here—yes, seven on us—all dependent on the weaving—nothing else. God knows how we lived. I pawned my things—and shall never get 'em again—to buy some bread, tea, and sugar, for my young ones there. Oh! it's like a famine in these parts just now among the people, now they're getting well. The people is a being brought to that state of destitution, that many say it's a blessing from the Almighty that takes 'em from the world. They lose all love of country—yes, and all hopes; and they prays to be tortured no longer. Want is common to a hundred of families close here to-morrow morning. There's seven on us sleeping in this room—but it's a very large room to some weavers'—theirs a'n't above half the size of this here. The weavers is in general five or six all living and working in the same room. There's four on us here in this bed. One head to foot—one at our back, along the bolster; and me and my wife side by side. And there's four on 'em over there. My brother Tom makes up the other one, but he a'n't in yet. There's a nice state in a Christian land! How many do you think lives in this house? Why, twenty-three living souls. Oh! a'n't it too bad? I can't say what I thinks about the young uns. Why, you loses your nat'ral affection for 'em. The people in general is ashamed to say how they thinks on their children. It's wretched in the extreme to see one's children, and not be able to do to 'em as a parent ought; and I'll say this here, after all you've heerd me state—that the government of my native land ought to interpose their powerful arm to put a stop to such things. Billy, just turn up that shell, now, and let the gentleman see what beautiful fabrics we're in the habit of producing—and then he shall say whether we ought to be in the filthy state we are. Just show the light, Tilly! There! that's for ladies to wear and adorn them, and make them handsome.'

It was an exquisite piece of morone-coloured velvet, that, amidst all the squalor of the place, seemed marvellously beautiful, and it was a wonder to see it unsoiled, amid all the poverty that surrounded it.

‘They’ve lowered the wages so low,’ continued the poor weaver, ‘that one would hardly believe the people would take the work. But what’s one to do?—the children can’t *quite* starve. Oh, no!—oh no!’

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From the home of the silk weaver, we pass by an easy transition to—

#### THE HOME OF THE DOCK LABOURER.

The family here lived in the top back-room in a small house, up a dismal court. I was told by the woman who answered the door to mount the steep stairs, as she shrieked out to the wife to show me a light. I found the man seated on the edge of the bedstead, with six young children grouped round him. These were all shoeless; and, playing on the bed, was an infant with only a shirt to cover it. The room was about *seven* feet square, and, with the man and his wife, there were *eight* human creatures living in it. In the middle of the apartment, upon a chair, stood a washing-tub, foaming with fresh suds, and from the white crinkled hands of the wife it was plain that I had interrupted her in her washing. On one chair close by was a heap of dirty linen, and on another were flung the newly washed. There was a saucepan on the handful of fire, and the only ornaments on the mantelpiece were two flat-irons and a broken shaving-glass. On the table at which I took my notes, stood the bottom of a broken ginger beer-bottle filled with soda. The man was without a coat, and wore an old tattered and greasy black satin waistcoat. Across the ceiling ran strings to hang the clothes upon.

On my observing to the woman, that I supposed she dried the clothes in that room, she told me they were obliged to do so, though it gave them all colds and bad eyes. On the floor was a small piece of matting, and on the shelves in the corner one or two plates.

In answer to my questionings, the man told me he had been a dock labourer for five or six years. He was formerly in her Majesty’s Stationery-office. When there, he

had 150*l.* a year. He had left through accepting a bill of exchange for 87*l.* He was suspended eight years ago, and had petitioned the Lords of the Treasury, but never could get any answer. After that, he was out of work for two or three years, and went about doing what he could get, such as writing letters.' 'Then,' said the wife, 'you went into Mr. What's-his-name's shop.' 'Oh, yes,' answered the man, 'I had six months' employment at Clerkenwell.'

Before this they had lived upon their things. He had a good stock of furniture and clothing at that time.

'Oh, sir,' exclaimed the woman, 'we have been really very bad off indeed; sometimes without even food or firing, in the depth of winter. It is not until recently that we have been to say *very* badly off, because within the last four years has been our worst trouble.'

'We buy most bread,' proceeded the wife, 'and a bit of firing, and I *do* manage on a Saturday night to get them a bit of meat for Sunday, if I possibly can. But what with the soap, and one thing and another, that's the only day they get a bit, unless I've some given me. As for clothing, I'm sure I can't get them any, unless I have that given me—poor little things! We buried one only three months ago. She was an afflicted little creature for sixteen or seventeen months; it was one person's work to attend to her, and we was very badly off for a few months then.'

'We've known what it is sometimes to go without bread and coals in the depth of winter,' said the man. 'Last Christmas two years, we did so for the whole day, until the wife came home in the evening, and brought 6*d.* for her day's work. I was looking after the children. I was at home ill. I have known us to sit several days, and not have more than 6*d.* to feed and warm the whole of us for the day. We buy half a quartern loaf, that is 4½*d.*, or sometimes 5*d.*; and then we have 1*d.* for coals;—that is pretty nigh all we can have for our money. Sometimes we get a little oatmeal, and make gruel. We have hard work to keep the children warm at all. What with their clothes, and what we had, we do as well as we can. My children is very contented; give 'em bread, and they're as

happy as all the world! that's one comfort.—For instance, to-day we've had half a quartern loaf, and we had a piece left of last night's, after I came home. I had been earning some money yesterday. We had two ounces of butter, and I had this afternoon a quarter of an ounce of tea, and a pennyworth of sugar. When I was ill, I've had two or three of the children around me, fretting, at a time, for want of food. At the death of my child a friend gave me half a sovereign to bury it. The parish provided me with a coffin, and it cost me about three shillings besides. We didn't have her taken away from here not as a parish funeral, *exactly*. I agreed, that if the undertaker would fetch it, and let it stand in an open place that he has got, near his shop, until the Saturday, which was the time, I would give him 3s. to let a man come with a pall, to throw over the coffin, so that it might not be seen exactly that it was a parish funeral. Even the people in the house don't know, not one of them, that the child was buried in that way. I had to give 1s. 6d. for a pair of shoes before I could follow the little thing to the grave, and we paid 1s. 9d. for rent—all out of the half sovereign. I think there's some people at the Docks a great deal worse off than us.'

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The next home that may be cited as the type of the dwelling-places belonging to a certain *class* of workpeople, rather than as the abode of a particular *individual* appertaining to such class, is—

#### THE NEEDLEWOMEN'S HOME.

The two sempstresses to whom I allude were living together in the garret of a 'coal and potato warehouse,' in one of the streets off Drury-lane. They were drawn-bonnet makers, and two of the most worthy and industrious people I have met with. After paying their rent, all these two poor workwomen had left to purchase food and clothing (I made the calculation from their account books, extending over four years, and in which even the value of the different

articles given to them in charity had been entered as part of their gains), was throughout the year 1846, *fourpence farthing* each per day—throughout the year 1847, *threepence halfpenny*—throughout the year 1848, *twopence halfpenny*—and throughout 1849, *twopence halfpenny also*. To get this amount, it should be remembered that during ‘the season’ each had to work from eighteen to twenty hours every day, including Sundays. Every year, they told me, there were generally seven months, and at the very least six, that they could not pay rent, owing to the periodic character of the drawn-bonnet trade; during the other six months they had to work night and day, in order to clear off the rent that was owing. They could not go into a better lodging, because they could not get credit for the winter months excepting where they were known.

Their room was taken furnished. It was a small attic, seven feet square, without any fireplace, and several panes gone from the windows. There was scarcely any furniture: only one chair; the other party had to sit on the bed. They paid 2s. 6d. a week.

The first winter they lived there, the landlady insisted on having her rent every week, and then they were three months and never had a piece of bread—not a crumb—to eat. They were forced to live on oatmeal. Frequently they had a pennyworth between them for the whole day.

After the first year, the landlady, having had experience of their honesty, allowed them to go on credit during the winter time. Indeed, they had been compelled to let their rent go 12s. 6d. in arrear the first winter of all. But they paid it directly they had work, and since then the landlady had never troubled them during the winter for the rent—never, in fact, asked for it. She was satisfied that they would pay it directly they could. They were convinced, they told me, that no one else would do the same thing, for their landlady was very kind to them, and allowed them the occasional use of her fire.

They never went in debt for anything but their rent. If they had not the money to buy food, they went without. If they had anything to pledge, they got their food that way; and if they were quite ‘up,’ and had nothing to pledge,

‘ why then,’ said one of the poor old creatures, smiling, to me, ‘ we starve: yes, we’re obliged to it. We’d rather do that than go in debt. We should always be thinking about it. I’m sure, last winter, the rent we owed was always in my head—when I went to bed and when I got up; I was afraid we should never rub it off.’

One of the parties is an old maiden woman, and the other a widow. The one is forty-three years old, and the widow fifty-four. They have been working together seven years. The widow was formerly in better circumstances. Her husband was a farmer in Yorkshire, and her father was a very large farmer, in the same county. The maiden woman was once in service; now she is afflicted with the lumbago, and is able only to work at her needle. The two of them have been without food for thirty hours.

Always, during winter, they were very badly off—their principal nourishment at that time was oatmeal. In the summer, they get as many things as they can out of pawn, and sit up night and day, toiling to pay their winter’s rent score. They say that those who get their living by needle-work must, they are convinced, do the same as they do; they are satisfied there are thousands in London who starve, get into debt, and pledge regularly every winter, and then slave night and day in the summer to pay their debts and redeem their clothes again.—*This is the industrious needle-woman’s regular life.*

In the summer of 1849 (I saw them at the latter part of that year), they had paid off as much as 7*l.* of back rent, and to do that, they had worked regularly for six months eighteen and twenty hours a day, Sunday and weekday. They had often sat, the two of them, and worked from daylight at three o’clock in the morning. They had got up at two to do their own little domestic work, so that they might begin work *immediately it was daylight*, and then worked on, frequently with only one cup of tea through the whole day, till eleven at night. They never burnt a candle but when they had work to do—they could not afford it; *and they never had a fire, even in the depths of winter.*

Yet, after all this toil, suffering, and privation, their reward

was a wretched lodging, and twopence-halfpenny a day, the year through.

The Slop Tailors, or men working under 'Sweaters' (a class of middlemen, so designated because they exact the greatest amount of labour for the smallest amount of pay), are, if possible, in a worse condition even than the needlewomen.

#### THE SWEATERS' HOMES.

The sweater's men generally lodge where they work. A sweater usually keeps about six men. These occupy two small garrets; one room is called the kitchen, and the other the workshop; and here the whole of the six men, and the sweater, his wife and family, live and sleep. 'One sweater I worked with,' said one of my informants, had four children and six men; and they, together with the wife, sister-in-law, and himself, all lived in two rooms, and slept there as well. There were two turn-up bedsteads in one room, and we slept three in a bed. There was no chimney, and indeed no ventilation whatever. I was near losing my life there. The foul air of so many people working all day in the place, and sleeping there at night, was quite suffocating. Almost all the men were consumptive, and I myself attended the Dispensary for Disease of the Lungs. The room in which we all slept was not more than six feet square. We were all sick, and weak, and loath to work.

'It is surprising to me,' said a man who knew their habits well, 'that, working and living together in such numbers, and in such small close rooms, in narrow close back courts, as they do, *they are not all swept off by some pestilence.* I myself have seen some half a dozen men at work in a room that was little better than a bed long. It was as much as one could do to move between the wall and the bedstead, when it was down. There were two beds in this room, and they nearly filled the place. The ceiling was so low that I could not stand upright in the room. There was no ventilation; no fire-place, and only a small window. When the window was open, you could nearly touch the houses at the back, and if the room had not been at the top of the house, the men could not have seen at all. The staircase was so narrow



steep, and dark, that it was difficult to grope your way to the top of the house. It was like going up a steeple. This is the usual kind of place in which the sweater's men are lodged.'

In 1844, the operative tailors instituted an inquiry into the sweating system, and then it was found that there were at the west end 676 men, women, and children, working under 'sweaters,' and occupying 92 small rooms, the majority of which measured eight feet by ten. This gives, upon an average, more than 7 persons to each apartment. These 676 individuals were composed of 179 men, 85 women, 45 boys, 78 girls, and 265 young children, the latter being members of the sweater's family.

Now the council of the Statistical Society, in 1847, caused a similar kind of inquiry to be made into the number of inhabitants located in Church-lane, St. Giles's. Twelve houses were then examined, and it was found that in them were located 461 individuals, or upwards of 38 per house. Assuming each house to consist of six rooms, every room then would have harboured a little more than 6 persons, *so that the tailors at work under the sweating system were found to be one-seventh more closely crowded than the people in even the worst part of St. Giles's.*

'Dividing the number of cubic feet of air in the twelve houses in Church-lane by the number of people found in them,' says the report of the Statistical Society, 'the average supply for each individual was only 175 feet, while 1000 cubic feet is the number deemed necessary for a single prisoner in England.'

*In the sweater's apartments, however, the supply is but little more than 90 cubic feet to each workman within them.* Hence it follows that the people working under the sweating system live in rooms even more densely crowded than the heart of St. Giles's, and in which there is twice as little air as in the worst part of London, and only one-tenth the quantity that is held necessary for the existence of every felon in the kingdom. According to Dr. Ure, an ordinary-sized man consumes 46,000 cubic inches, or upwards of twenty-six cubic feet of oxygen gas daily. At this estimate,

the quantity of *atmospheric air* absolutely necessary for the mere carrying on of existence would be 130 cubic feet per diem; and yet those at work under the sweating system are styed in apartments where they can each get but little more than 90 cubic feet. No wonder, then, that consumption is found so prevalent among the tailors—indeed, the marvel is that they are not stifled, as in the hold of a ‘slave ship.’

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#### THE ‘LUMPER’S’ HOME.

To show the temptations that beset the poor, I give the statement of a woman known to all her neighbours as a very thrifty housewife, and an active, industrious woman. Her children’s, her own, and her husband’s clothing, scant and old as it was, all showed great care-taking; and her home was, at the least, tidy. She was the wife of one of the labouring men engaged in discharging the timber-ships, and who are called ‘lumpers,’ from the fact of their being employed by some publican who contracts for the job ‘in the lump.’ This system is fraught with every kind of evil to the workmen and their families, the men being forced, or rather ‘expected,’ to spend the greater portion of their earnings in drink, at the house of their employer. The ballast-heavers suffer from the same system. The houses of such people hardly deserve the name of lairs.

A few years back, a little after Christmas, the ‘lumper’s’ wife and her husband had been out all day, penniless, seeking for work, and had returned to their room a little before dusk, without having earned a farthing. The wife was then suckling her first child, which was two months old. She felt faint from long want of nourishment, and the only thing in the house on which she thought it possible to raise a penny was a glass tumbler.

‘That very tumbler,’ she said, ‘which you see on the table. Everything but that had gone to the pawn-shop. Well, it cost  $5\frac{1}{2}d.$ , and I went to —— and tried to sell it for  $2d.$  I couldn’t sell it at all, as the dealer had

too many of such things. I then went to a neighbour, and said, 'Mrs. B——, for God's sake lend me 2*d.* on this glass, for we're starving.' 'Mrs. ——,' said she, 'I'm sure you should have 3*d.*, but I haven't 3*d.*, nor a halfpenny.'

'Well, when I got back it was dark, and my husband had gone to bed, such as it was,—for we had neither blankets nor sheets left to cover us,—as the best way to forget he was hungry and cold. We hadn't a bit of fire nor candle, but a little light came from the lamp in the street through the window.

'I sat down by the fire, that wasn't in, to suckle my child—poor little Bill! he's a fine lad, now—and I found I had hardly any milk.

'It seemed to me the child must be starved, since I had nothing to give it. All at once a thought came into my head, and I said to myself, 'Yes, I'll cut my own throat, and little Bill's too'—and I determined I would.

'Then I said to myself, 'No, I won't; for if I can cut my own throat, I know I can't cut the child's; so it'll be little use. I'll go to the waterworks, and jump in, with him in my arms.'

'I got up to do it, and then another thought darted into my mind, and I laid down the child on that chair, and rushing up to my husband, shook him violently, as I cried, 'You villain, I'll cut your throat, I will!'

'He jumped up, and seized hold of me, and then I felt how bad I'd been. But one's passion must have some vent, so I seized by the spout that very kettle you see there, and I smashed it on the floor. It was the first thing that came to hand.

'After that I felt calmed a bit, and began to see how wicked I'd been: and then I fell down on my knees, and cried like a child, for I was thankful to God I'd been preserved. I soon went to bed, and there I prayed never to feel the like again.'

This statement was made with perfect simplicity; it came out incidentally, and the poor woman had no reason to believe that it would be printed.

Such are a few of the homes and scenes that the poor have to appear in. Worse, however, still remains behind, and these may be spoken of collectively as—

#### THE HOMES OF THE PEOPLE IN JACOB'S ISLAND.

Jacob's Island is a patch of ground insulated by the common sewer. It lies on the Surrey side of the Thames, and is not far from Bermondsey. I had occasion to explore this spot, and the condition of the people, during the last visitation of the cholera, in 1849. The striking peculiarity of Jacob's Island consists in the wooden galleries and sleeping-rooms at the back of the houses which overhang the dark ditch that stagnates beside them. The houses are built upon piles, so that the place has positively the look of a Flemish street, flanking a sewer instead of a canal; while the little rickety bridges that span the huge gutters and connect court with court, give it the appearance of the Venice of drains, where channels before and behind the houses do duty for the ocean. Across some parts of the stream, rooms have been built, so that house adjoins house; and here, with the very stench of death rising through the boards, human beings sleep night after night, until the last sleep of all comes upon them, years before its time. Scarce a house but yellow linen is hanging to dry over the balustrade of staves, or else run out on a long oar, where the sulphur-coloured clothes hang over the waters, and you are almost wonderstruck to see their form and colour unreflected in the putrid ditch below.

At the back of nearly every house that boasts a square foot or two of outlet—and the majority have none at all—are pigsties. In front waddle ducks, while cocks and hens scratch at the cinder-heaps. Indeed, the creatures that fatten on offal are the only living things that seem to flourish here.

The water of the huge ditch in front of the houses is covered with a scum almost like a cobweb, and prismatic with grease. In it float large masses of green rotting weed, and against the posts of the bridges are swollen carcasses of

dead animals, almost bursting with the gases of putrefaction. Along the banks are heaps of indescribable filth, the phosphoretted smell from which tells of the rotting fish, while the oyster-shells are like pieces of slate from their coating of mud and dirt. In some parts the fluid is almost as red as blood, from the colouring matter that pours into it from the reeking leather-dressers close by.

On entering the precincts of the pest island, the air has literally the smell of a graveyard, and a feeling of nausea and heaviness comes over any one unaccustomed to imbibe such an atmosphere. It is not only the nose, but the stomach, that tells how heavily the breeze is loaded with sulphuretted hydrogen; and as soon as you cross one of the crazy rotting bridges spanning the reeking ditch, you know, as surely as if you had chemically tested it, by the black colour of what was once the white-lead paint upon the door-posts and window-sills, that the atmosphere is thickly charged with this deadly gas. A silver spoon, of which I caught sight in one of the least wretched dwellings, was positively chocolate-coloured by the action of the sulphur on the metal.

In answer to my questions, one of the inmates of these pest-houses told me she was never well. Indeed, the signs of the deadly influence of the place were painted in the earthy complexion of the poor woman. 'Neither I nor my children know what health is,' said she. 'But what is one to do? We must live where our bread is. I've tried to let the house, and put a bill up, but cannot get any one to take it.'

A medical gentleman, who had kindly undertaken to pilot me through the island, led me to narrow close courts, where the sun never shone, and the air seemed almost as stagnant and putrid as the ditch we had left. The blanched cheeks of the people that came out to stare at us, were white as vegetables grown in the dark; and as we stopped to look down the alley, my informant told me that the place teemed with children, and that if a horn was blown, they would swarm like bees at the sound of a gong. The houses were mostly inhabited by "corn-runners," coal porters,

and 'long-shore-men,' getting a precarious living—earning sometimes many shillings a day, and then for weeks doing nothing.

At one house, a child sat nursing a dying half-comatose baby on a door-step. The skin of its little arms, instead of being plumped out with health, was loose and shrivelled, like an old crone's, having a flabby monkey-like appearance more than the character of the human cuticle.

I was stopped by my companion in front of a house 'to let.' The building was as narrow and as unlike a human habitation as the wooden houses in a child's box of toys. 'In this house,' said my guide, 'when the scarlet fever was raging in the neighbourhood, the barber who was living here suffered fearfully from it; and no sooner did the man get well of this, than he was seized with typhus, and scarcely had he recovered from the first attack, than he was struck down a second time with the same terrible disease. Since then, he has lost his child with cholera, and at this moment his wife is in the workhouse suffering from the same affliction. The only wonder is that they are not all dead, for as the man sat at his meals in his small shop, if he put his hand against the wall behind him, it would be covered with the soil of his neighbour's privy, sopping through the wall.'

As I passed along the reeking banks of the sewer, the sun shone upon a narrow slip of water. In the bright light it appeared the colour of strong green tea; and positively looked as solid as black marble in the shadow,—indeed, it was more like watery mud than muddy water; and YET I WAS ASSURED THIS WAS THE ONLY WATER THE WRETCHED INHABITANTS HAD TO DRINK.

As I gazed in horror at it, I saw drains and sewers emptying their filthy contents into it; I SAW A WHOLE TIER OF DOORLESS PRIVIES IN THE OPEN ROAD, COMMON TO MEN AND WOMEN, BUILT OVER IT; I heard bucket after bucket of filth splash into it; and the limbs of the vagrant boys bathing in it seemed, by pure force of contrast, white as Parian marble.

And yet, as I stood doubting the fearful statement, I beheld a little child, from one of the galleries opposite,

lower a tin can with a rope, to fill a large bucket that stood beside her. In each of the balconies that hung over the stream the self-same tub was to be seen. In this the inhabitants put the mucky liquid to stand, so that they may, after it has rested for a day or two, skim the fluid from the solid particles of filth, pollution, and disease which have sunk below.

As the little thing dangled her tin cup as gently as possible into the stream, a bucket of night-soil was poured down from the next gallery.

In this wretched place I was taken to a house where an infant lay dead of the cholera. I asked if they *really did* drink the water?

The answer was, 'They were obliged to drink the ditch, unless they could beg or thieve a pailfull of pure water.' 'But have you spoken to your landlord about having it laid on for you?' 'Yes, sir; and he says he'll do it, and do it—but we know him better than to believe him.'

'Why, sir,' cried another woman, who had shot out from an adjoining room, 'he wout even give us a little white-wash, though we tell him we'll willingly do the work ourselves: and look here, sir,' she added, 'all the tiles have fallen off, and the rain pours in wholesale.'

In a place called Joiner's-court, with four wooden houses in it, there had been as many as five cases of cholera. In front, the poor souls, as if knowing by an instinct that plants were given to purify the atmosphere, had pulled up the paving stones before their dwellings, and planted a few stocks here and there in the rich black mould beneath. Here, I was taken up into a room where the window was within four feet of a high wall, at the foot of which, until very recently, ran the open common sewer. The room was so dark, that it was several minutes before I could perceive anything within it, and there was a smell of must and dry rot that told of damp and imperfect ventilation, while the unnatural size of the pupils of the wretched woman's eyes showed how much too long she had dwelt in this gloomy place.

Here, as usual, I heard stories that made the blood

curdle, of the cruelty of those from whom they rented the sties called dwellings. They had begged for pure water to be laid on, and the rain to be excluded; and the answer for eighteen years had been, that the lease was just out.

‘They knows its handy for a man’s work,’ said one and all, ‘and that’s the reason why they imposes on a body.’

This, indeed, seems to be the great evil. Out of these wretches’ health, comfort, and even lives, small capitalists reap a petty independence; and until the poor are rescued from the fangs of such mercenaries, there is but little hope either for their physical or moral welfare.

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The Reader is left to say whether many homes may not be so homely as to be no homes at all.



## TRUTHS FROM A PAWNBROKER.

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**I**N my trade there are so many evils constantly brought before our notice, that it is difficult to select any particular topic to write about, out of the mass of imprudence which we daily witness. I will, however, endeavour to touch upon those points that come most frequently before us, and are the cause of providing us with customers; and here I would take the opportunity of asserting that pawnbrokers, being a need to the necessitous, and that people never resort to us unless in their emergencies (arising either from real distress, or imprudence, profligacy, &c.), our trade is looked upon with a suspicious eye by the public at large, and that we do not have justice done to us. It is supposed that our profits are very large; I am sure that, by articles pledged under the value of 10*l.*, unless they are redeemed, we are generally losers—clothes particularly, for they go out of fashion. Besides, every advantage is taken of us; for instance, on a Saturday night, when there is a crush in the shop, they will imitate the mark on silver so well that, by gas light, we are often deceived; and soldiers and others pawn things upon us with the government mark, which we do not, in the necessary bustle of business, perceive, but which, by law, we are not allowed, of course, to sell. I do not say this may not arise partly from carelessness, but in a great many cases it is impossible to avoid it. As to our profits (and I do not think I am speaking in favour of the trade), I think there is no question less understood by our divines, our legislators, our magistrates, ay, by all who by station or talent hold a position in the administrative business of the country; and I will add, that there is no question that so materially concerns the well-being of the destitute poor of the united

kingdom. It is asked, are the drawbacks to our profits to be attributed to the dishonesty of the working-classes? Why, sir, the dishonesty is shared by every station in life, from the judge on the bench to the convicted felon. Who ever heard of the interests of a pawnbroker being protected, or his losses calling forth a regret? Even the very fact of his being the only witness to secure the conviction of some desperate villain, is converted into a slur on his moral character, while it entails on him a positive loss of property and time; and the frequent appearance of pawnbrokers as witnesses in our criminal courts is advanced as a good ground for the monstrous assertion, that the members of the trade take property in pledge with a guilty knowledge of the same being stolen. One remark I will hazard. Has ever a receiver been heard of appearing as a witness? Why I (and I state this humbly) have, on more than one occasion, suffered serious bodily injuries in securing criminals; and my modest application to the presiding judge for his order, that the prosecutor should pay *only a portion* of the money lent by me, on recovering my property, has been met with a smile of derision, and a peremptory demand that it should be given up; and yet we are expected to forward the ends of justice, when every step we take shows us that all justice (in our own cases) is set at nought, and its decrees are as a dead letter. To do justice to this subject would fill a volume; and as I have not the necessary talents to do credit to so extensive a subject, or could I reasonably expect any one to wade through such a mass of matter, dry, stale, and unprofitable as it must needs be, I will simply narrate the last act of magisterial intolerance that came under my observation, while employed as an assistant pawnbroker, and while attending the ——— Police Court on other business. A pawnbroker living in ———, was summoned to the above court for taking one penny by way of interest for the loan of 2s. for one month and three days, being an overcharge of one halfpenny, Mr. ——— being the presiding judge. The pawnbroker pleaded guilty to the charge, and urged that the overcharge was made by a boy in his employ. Now it can hardly be believed, but the fact stands recorded,

that, for this offence, a fine of 5*l.* was inflicted, or *two thousand four hundred times* the amount of the overcharge. Now, I have carefully examined the various fines inflicted on tradesmen for the use of fraudulent weights and false balances; but I cannot find a tithe of the above amount of fine; and bearing in mind that the interest on this one article might have been a mistake in calculation, while the false weights defraud every customer, and is premeditated by the various tradesmen who resort to this fraudulent system.

I have dwelt at some length on this topic, and now will proceed to say a few words on the payment of wages. It has been, and is now still, the custom among some tradesmen, not to pay their wages till Saturday night. This is injudicious, and tends to the practice of Sunday trading; but the chief cause of this evil is, in my opinion, to be attributed to the habit of procrastination on the part of the working classes. The practice has not one redeeming quality; and the rejection by the legislature of every measure calculated to limit it, is a matter of deep regret and surprise to every person who has given the subject one moment's consideration. Putting the religious view out of the question, how stands the social? Why, the master, the servant, the tradesman, and the mechanic, are all sufferers; the two former are deprived of their Sabbath as a day of rest; the tradesman is defrauded of his customers; and the mechanic suffers in weight, quality, and morals. I am sure that few are aware that in very many tradesmen's (Sunday traders) shops, beer and spirits are frequently supplied to their customers of a Sunday morning, free of expense. And I think I can safely affirm, that in every clothes shop, the purchaser and the friends who accompany him, are all presented with a glass of liquor. This is another reason for the purchase being left till Sunday, knowing the public-houses are closed; the liquor is considered as twopence saved, forgetting that their senses have been blinded, for the purpose of making them pay five-fold for this same liquor. Shut the shops, and wages will be paid earlier. Pawnbrokers never open on Sundays—not one; the fine in their cases is 10*l.* Make the same to all,

and all will benefit. Some years since, it was the practice of pawnbrokers to keep open their shops till after midnight, they now close at eleven o'clock; and this alteration has had the effect of putting the Sunday clothes on the backs of many families, by drawing the tippling husband from the public-house at half-past ten or a quarter to eleven o'clock, whereas under the old system, he remained there till he was turned out, at twelve o'clock. No possible reason exists, why Sunday trading should continue after ten o'clock; and none but those who desire to treat tradesmen, their men, and boys, as abject slaves, and make mechanics their tyrants, can desire a continuation of this debasing system, and serf-like practice.

I am glad to say, however, that I believe the system of paying wages in public-houses, though it still prevails, does so but to a very limited extent; and, in my opinion, it will, in a very few years, cease entirely, and I think such a result will be attained by the payment of wages at noon on Saturdays. The injurious consequences of such a place for the payment of wages is self-apparent; but still I apprehend that in most cases it is selected by the influence of local or personal causes; as, for instance, I know a master bricklayer in the — road, whose brothers keep a public-house close by; and he pays his men at his *brother's house*. There can be no difference of opinion, but what it must help to keep the imprudent workman in his drinking habits, and sows the seed of drunkenness in the apprentices and boys in that employ. Yet, looking at the subject in all its bearings, I am still of opinion it will work its own cure, and am strengthened in that view by the fact, that the last few years have done wonders for the workmen in this particular.

It may next be asked whether experience does not show that there is a glut and then a stagnation of work? There is no denying that there is, at seasons, a more than usual demand for labour; and that such will always be the case at different periods, in all countries where three-fourths of the population mainly depend for support on the demand for the produce of their labour, is also clear. But I am of opinion that this more particularly occurs in season trades, as they are called—

for instance, painters, and those employed in the building trades, not in the staple commodities of the country. This increased demand for labour is met, in most instances, by the employers working the regular men *over-time*—a practice that admits of two objections, viz., the continuous labour of twelve hours' per diem is as much as the physical powers of the men are capable of enduring without injury to the system; and that where followed for any length of time, and in large establishments, it necessarily keeps the unemployed from participating in the advantages arising from the increased demand for labour; and I have also good grounds for believing that the additional amount of wages thus gained tends rather to increase their pecuniary difficulties than otherwise, from their general indifference as to the necessity of providing for periods of stagnation and distress; and have frequently heard steady men oppose, on principle, the practice of working *over-time*.

In concluding this paper, I will avert to one more topic, and will say a few words with regard to the question, who pawn most? Certainly the women pawn the most; but where large sums are required, men generally transact the business—but I should say they number as seven of the former to one of the latter.

Then, as regards the question of who drink most? As a matter of opinion, founded on my own observation, I should say women ranking under tradesmen's wives drink more than men, and that men taking rank as tradesmen and upwards, drink more than women. And in the pursuit of this vice, I see this difference in its effects—where carried to excess in the men, it tends to reduce the family to beggary and want, while in the woman the example is more frequently followed by members of the family, and the effect is felt more in the debasement of their morals, than in their absolutely requiring the necessaries of life, which, in the case of the man, is too frequently the result.

## THE HOMES OF THE POOR.

BY MARTIN F. TUPPER.

---

THE halls of the rich have been famous in song,  
Ever since flattery fawn'd upon wealth ;  
Feigning, to palaces only belong  
Honour and virtue, contentment and health :  
But, the glad tidings from heaven to earth  
Tell of true wealth in Humility's store ;  
Jewels of purity, patience, and worth,  
Blest above gold, in the homes of the poor.

Yes, the well-favour'd in fortune and rank  
Wisely will covet such riches untold,  
While the good Giver they heartily thank  
For the two talents of honour and gold ;  
Wisely such jewels of price will they seek,  
Cherishing good as the real Koh-i-noor,  
And from the diligent, modest, and meek,  
Learn to be rich in the homes of the poor.

Yet are those homes overclouded with night ;  
Poverty's sisters are Care and Disease ;  
And the hard wrestler in life's uphill fight  
Faints in the battle, and dies by degrees !  
Then, let his neighbour stand forth in his strength,  
Like the Samaritan, swift to procure  
Comfort and balm for his struggles at length,  
Pouring in peace on the homes of the poor.

Cleanliness, healthiness, water, and light,  
Rent within reason, and temperate rules,  
Work and fair wages (Humanity's right),  
Libraries, hospitals, churches, and schools,—

Thus, let us help the good brother in need,  
Dropping a treasure at Industry's door,  
Glad, by God's favour, to lighten indeed  
The burdens of life in the homes of the poor.

O ! there is much to be done, and that soon ;  
Classes are standing asunder, aloof :  
Hasten, Benevolence, with the free boon,  
Falling as sunshine on Misery's roof !  
Hasten, good stewards of a bountiful Lord,  
Greatly to imitate Him evermore,  
Binding together, in blessed accord,  
The halls of the rich with the homes of the poor !

THE END.





THE  
GENERAL SOCIETY  
FOR IMPROVING THE  
DWELLINGS OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

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the Secretaries, and any of the members of Managing Committee.*

## SECOND PROSPECTUS.

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Jan. 13, 1852.

SINCE the first Prospectus was issued, the Society, anxious to carry out its objects with as little delay as possible, has had under consideration many plans, and been in treaty for several plots of ground, on which to erect Model Dwelling Houses; it has also endeavoured to procure existing tenements, for the purpose of repairing and altering them into decent dwellings for the Working Classes. In the latter respect the Society has not been successful; but it has obtained a plot of ground, forming the block between New-street, Hopkins-street, Husband-street, and Cock-court, adjoining Broad-street, St. James', at present covered with worn-out and dilapidated houses. The buildings to be pulled down form a quadrangle, to which there is no entrance but through the houses themselves; yet, within this quadrangle, separated by a series of yards about six feet square, is a cow-house, the upper and lower floors of which are crowded with cows and pigs, and between this and the north side of the enclosed square is a block of wooden buildings, the first story of which is inhabited.

On this plot of ground (which is very convenient for the purpose, having four frontages towards streets) the Society purpose to erect eight Model Dwelling Houses, to contain accommodation for sixty-four families, at the least, each family

having the use of a set of two or three rooms, according to the number of persons to be lodged, with all the conveniences attached to each set of rooms. In carrying out this object, not only will the Society effect a large amount of good by providing decent dwellings for the Industrious Classes, but also destroy one of the worst nests of vice and wretchedness in the metropolis; and the friends of the poor are invited to inspect the locality in question, that they may witness the correctness of all that is herein described.

The Society has received from practical men estimates of the cost of the proposed buildings, and of the income likely to be derived therefrom, which show that a fair rate of interest, after payment of expenses, will be derived from the investment, and which fully justifies the Society in following out the proposed plan, the data being corroborated by the results of the labours of other Societies.

The Model Dwelling House for eight families already erected by the St. James' Society, in New-street, facing the proposed site (which has been inhabited for some months), has fully answered the expectations of its promoters; the rents have been punctually paid, and they produce, after everything is discharged, a profit equal to a fair interest on the capital invested;—this profit rent is intended, by the St. James' Society, to form a nucleus in aid of subscriptions for the extension of the plan.

For the erection of the eight Houses before described, the co-operation of the St. James' Society has been obtained, and the plan already so successfully carried out by them will be adopted in the proposed undertaking, and afterwards the system extended to other districts, as subscriptions are obtained and funds arise from Houses erected.

It is found by experience that the Working Classes dis-

like Lodging Houses of a marked character, inducing the idea of charity, or which are regulated by restrictive rules which interfere with liberty of action ; to avoid these objections as much as possible, the proposed Buildings will assimilate externally with the better class of modern Houses erected for the Middle Classes (with stone staircases), and the rules will be merely such as are usually inserted in agreements between Landlord and Tenant.

To effect so great a benefit as herein described, a large expense must be incurred. To enable the Society to commence operations, subscriptions are earnestly solicited, the interest, or profit, arising from the outlay of which will in future years allow of the extension of the system to other localities, many of which require assistance.

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## R U L E S.

THAT the Society be denominated THE GENERAL SOCIETY FOR IMPROVING THE DWELLINGS OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

I. *Objects.*—To improve existing Dwellings, or build new ones, in densely-populated districts. To diminish, as far as possible, the evils which arise from the present system of subletting, by which both the real owner and the tenant suffer ; and generally to ameliorate the domestic condition of the Working Classes.

The Society, whilst carrying out these objects, desires to show, by periodical statements of its expenditure and receipts, that it offers as safe an investment as those Companies whose avowed object is return for capital ;

so that, by its system of collecting Rents and Management, landlords would greatly improve their property, and that without loss.

II. *Members*.—That all Donors of Ten Guineas, in one sum, shall be Life Members; and that every Subscriber of One Guinea, annually, shall be a Member of the Society.

The subscriptions and donations to pay expenses of the Society; and any surplus to go to form a nucleus to further the objects of the Society.

III. *Officers*.—That there shall be a President, Vice-Presidents, Five Trustees, Two Treasurers, an Honorary Secretary, all *ex-officio* Members of Managing Committee, a Managing Committee, and such other Officers as shall be convenient.

IV. *General Meetings*.—That the Society shall meet upon the last Monday in April in every year, in some convenient place to be appointed by the Managing Committee, whereof previous notice shall be given to all the Members; and that they, or the major part of them then and there present, shall elect a President, Vice Presidents, and Treasurers from amongst the Life Members, exclusive of *ex-officio* Members; also three Auditors from amongst the Subscribers, to serve in the said offices for the ensuing year.

V. *Trustees*.—That at the First General Meeting of the Society, five Trustees shall be elected from among the Life Members, whose office shall be for Life.

VI. *Managing Committee*.—That at the first General Meeting of the Society, a Managing Committee, to consist of twenty-four Members, shall be elected, and that one-third of these shall go out of office every year, but shall be

immediately re-eligible. That at the expiration of the first year, the eight who are to retire shall be those who have attended the least number of times at the Committees; the eight who are to go out at the end of the second year shall be determined in like manner. That all questions shall be determined by a show of hands, or by a poll of the Members present, but if demanded, it must be in writing.

VII. *Vacancies*.—That in case of death, or the removal of any of the said officers of the Society, the Managing Committee are authorized to fill up any such vacancy or vacancies until the next General Meeting of the Society.

VIII. *Ex-officio Members*.—That the President, Vice-Presidents, Trustees, and Treasurers, shall be ex-officio members of the Managing Committee.

IX. *Quorum*.—That five Members of the Managing Committee form a quorum.

X. *Financial Officers*.—That the Treasurers shall manage the Financial concerns of the Society, under the direction of the Managing Committee.

XI. *Committee Meetings*.—That the Committee shall meet upon the first Tuesday in every month, for the purpose of transacting the business of the Society, and at such other times as may be deemed requisite.

XII. *Secretary and Collector*.—That the Committee be empowered to appoint a Secretary, Collectors, and such other paid officers as they may find necessary.

XIII. *Accounts*.—That the Accounts of the Society be closed on the last day of each year, and be audited within one month next ensuing; and that such Accounts, together

with the Report of the Managing Committee, be submitted to the General Meeting.

XIV. *Property*.—That all property of the Society shall be vested in the Trustees for the time being, and that they shall, upon becoming Trustees, sign a declaration of Trust, and their readiness to relinquish the same, if required to do so by a requisition of the General Meeting.

XV. That no alteration can be made in the Rules without notice given to the Secretary a week previous to the meeting of the Committee, and that such notice be signed by five members; and that the proposed alterations be communicated to the Secretary.

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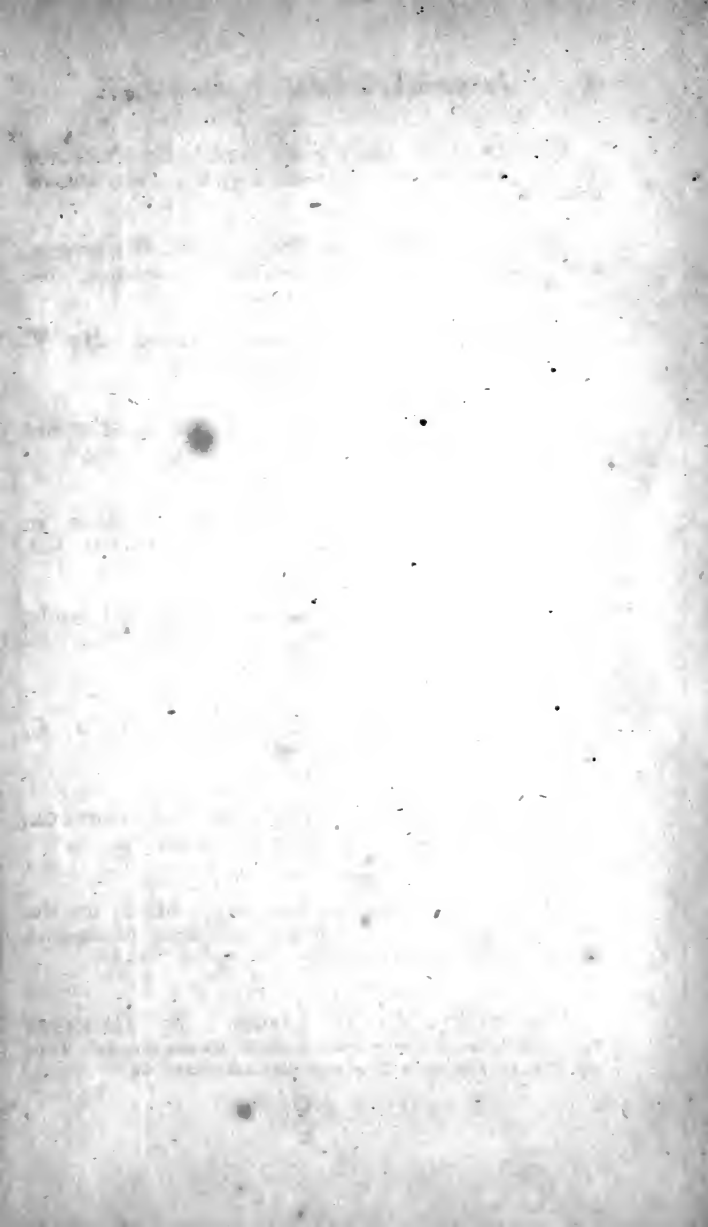
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